

# MONSTER WORLD

#270 NOV/DEC  
2013



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CM PUNK: BEAST IN THE WORLD—THE EXCLUSIVE FM INTERVIEW!

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#270 NOV/DEC 2013

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-CLAUDE RAINS, THE INVISIBLE MAN

# MONSTER WORLD



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## OPENING WOUNDS

"You know it's fake, right?"

I've lost count of how many times I've been smugly asked that question by someone who's just learned that I'm a fan of professional wrestling. Generally, my first instinct is to grab them and toss them off of a ten foot steel ladder onto a concrete floor so they can experience that physics can't be faked. But I tend to take it in a different direction and explain that wrestling is like action theater: instead of breaking into song, they break into fights. And just like I know that Rocky and Apollo didn't actually beat each other senseless, the choreography, drama, and story make for unparalleled entertainment.

Wrestling is storytelling. And some of the greatest stories came to us courtesy of the Mexican wrestlers known as Luchadores: masked men whose battles in the ring led them to becoming international cinematic superstars, superheroes who battled all manner of man and beast. While Santo, the most famous luchador of all, and his fellow fighters received the odd story here and there in Famous Monsters, I always thought it was a topic that deserved its own feature coverage. After all, these men battled more monsters than Van Helsing, Ash, and Jack Burton combined! From Dracula and the Wolf Man to several Frankensteins, Martians, and Invisible Assassins, no monster was left un-suplexed. My dad was raised in south Florida; and because of this he grew up with a great affinity for lucha libre (especially Mil Mascaras). Fortunately, he made it a point to raise me with these same appellations, for which I am greatly indebted to him.

I have been a fan of WWE Superstar and fellow Chicago boy CM Punk for over a decade. I knew the first time I saw him in a park district building in a Windy City suburb that he was going to make a mark on the Sports Entertainment world. Today, he has held more titles than any of his contemporaries, sells out arenas worldwide, and is arguably the biggest name in the business. He also happens to be a huge Monster Kid. It was a pleasure and an honor to sit down with him and talk everything from Creature and Carpenter to Michael Myers and Lon Chaney's true hiding spot.

Lastly, it's important to mention that in issue 268 in the "House of the Horror Heroes" article, we failed to attribute FM writer and dear friend Melissa Garza of [www.scaredstiffreviews.com](http://www.scaredstiffreviews.com) as a source for some of the material featured. Check out her site and her upcoming work in FM. Thanks, Melissa!

Masked monster brawlers, 80 years of the Invisible Man, Freddy's glove, and anniversaries for Romero's classics—it must be another Halloween at FM.

Ed Blair  
Executive Editor

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Mexican artist Rafael Gallur is part of a new generation of artists inspired by the cultural heroes of Lucha Libre.



# By TERROR DESIGN

D.M. GUNNINGHAM

## THE NIGHTMARE GLOVE

The year was 1907 when a gentleman by the name of William Orson Wells started a leather glove company, aptly titled the Wells Glove Company. Four years later it became the Wells Lamont Company, and seventy-seven years after that, one of the company's signature gloves became an integral part of the holy grail of horror weapons. But the Wells Lamont 1140 work glove was only part of a nightmarish equation. Hammered copper plates, custom-crafted steak knives, master effects ingenuity, and the brilliant vision of horror genre legend Wes Craven gave birth to a razor sharp slashing device known the world over as Freddy Krueger's glove.

Constructed by special effects team Jim Doyle and Lou Carlucci, the glove was based on a rough drawing that, as Wes Craven described, was meant to be crude and look like something a janitor in a boiler room would create. It wasn't long before the NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET effects team had welded four blades (which many believe to be Case P210 tomato knives) to sculpted copper plating that wrapped over the fingertips. The finger armatures were then connected to a copper plate with tinner's rivets and attached to an oily leather glove. It was in fact simple, crude, and completely terrifying. But a

weapon without a master to wield it is just a lifeless prop. Craven needed someone to slip into the glove, someone who wasn't afraid of it.

He auditioned many actors and stunt men for the role, but their performances were safe, stilted, and mechanical, until a young actor who had been getting exposure on a television series called *V* walked into the room. Robert Englund was not at all what Wes had envisioned, but Robert was not afraid to embrace the dark side and bring a visceral energy to the part of Freddy Krueger. Craven took a chance on him, and as we all know, a new legend was born into the pantheon of nefarious movie monsters.

*Famous Monsters* recently caught up with Wes Craven and Robert Englund to talk about the glove and the impact it still has after 32 years.

**Famous Monsters.** Let's talk about the birth of the glove. Where did the inspiration come from?

**Wes Craven.** Freddy's glove came out of a lot of intellectual brainstorming. His whole costume was carefully thought out—about what would be upsetting and disconcerting to people. The sweater was made up of two different color stripes that clashed and are some of the most difficult colors for the

brain to compute side by side, according to an article in *Scientific American*. When it came down to his glove, I thought we needed something that would feel ancient and hold the intelligence of humanity and yet be a primal weapon, like an animal claw.

**FM.** When the effects team first showed it to you, was it what you hoped it would be?  
**WC.** Just looking at it was so striking, and it was exactly what I had hoped that it might be. That combination of the human hand with long claws like a cave bear. It was so primitive and so evocative that I thought I would let it do the introduction to the film without seeing who Freddy was right away.

**Robert Englund.** I remember Wes took me in the office, and he had a mock up of the revolving room—the one we used to kill Tina in, and also for the Johnny Depp exploding bed effect. Next to it was the glove, and I remember trying it on and one of the fingers had been hammered a little too tight so they adjusted it for me. The 14 year-old boy in me came alive, because it really was cool. There was something about the homemade look of it that I loved, and you could really imagine this pathetic little man in his evil Santa's workshop fashioning it out of leftover stuff he had

lying around the boiler room. There were at least three gloves in the first film. The one with the sharp blades was affectionately called the "hero" glove. With that one I could cut through fabric and tear through things easily. One glove was made with Mylar blades so that it would catch the light in a long or medium shot. Then there was a stunt one with hard rubber blades for fight scenes.

**FM.** How did it affect your performance?

**RE.** This is something I found on the first week of shooting: when you are wearing the hero glove, you want it to hang clear of your thigh to avoid getting cut. There was a little bit of weight to it. I saw a shadow of myself and realized I was standing like a gunslinger, and it looked cool, so I embraced that stance. There was something rock'n'roll and evil about it. I became agile with it very quickly. There were these sequences in the script where Freddy would scratch with the claw and it would spark, or you would hear this incredible sound. I practiced early on, running around the Desilu stage and dragging the blades over a banister or wrapping them around the edge of a door so I could build up dexterity. I developed this "Freddy entrance" where the blades lead the way into a hallway or room, like an extension of his evil pulling him along. These are things that came to me at any given time. So the glove opened that up for me during the work process. The glove inspired it, I should say.

**FM.** I'll never forget the first time I heard those blades drag across the metal pipes in the boiler room. It still gives me goosebumps.

**WC.** We didn't know what the sound of the glove would be like until we got into the sound mix. I wanted it to sound like fingernails on a chalkboard. The sound guy found that if he took steak knives and scrapped them on the bottom of metal folding chairs, he would get that signature sound.

**FM.** So the glove gave more to the character than you thought it might have?

**RE.** It was always inspiring me. Even on the last movie, I was finding something to do with it, whether it was pinning one of my various nubile teenage girls to the floor or to a wall. I'd be rolling in bed with the actor and I would touch them or caress them with the glove, but seeing it out of my own eyes—not the characters eyes—and I would see how great it looked, like running it through Heather Langenkamp's hair or against the nightgown. There was a violent and almost sexual image going on there. We had to play with it. Sometimes it was an accident and sometimes it was intentional and directed. But it was inspiring.

**FM.** I clearly remember the first time I saw someone dress up as Freddy. It was seventh grade, and a fellow classmate named Greg had come to school on Halloween with a dirty baggy sweatshirt, butter knives attached to his fingers with medical tape, and cheap Karo syrup blood smeared all over his face. He ran around quoting Freddy lines and creeping everyone out. His costume was absurd and shoddy, but everyone knew who he was and he still managed to scare the crap out of them. There was so much power in the monster, and he knew it.

When did you know

Freddy was part of the zeitgeist?

**RE.** I think for me it was when I went to do pick up shots on NIGHTMARE ON ELMSTREET PART 2. I think Wes knew Jack Sholder [director of Part 2] from New Line Cinema, and he loaned him the glove from the original film to use for the filming. I don't know if the prop guys had sold the ones from Part 2 or they were out of town so we didn't have access to the gloves from the film to use. But there were rumblings about security and they were worried about the gloves. I think that there were guys on that shoot pretending to be grips or gaffers who had found out about the pick up shots and our shooting location through *Fangoria* magazine, who was going to do a set visit or something like that. Someone took that information and posed as a crew member so they could steal the glove. That's when I realized it was something incredible.

**FM.** Where is the original glove now?

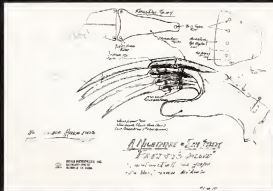
**WC.** I've heard rumors, but nothing conclusive.

**RE.** I have my suspicions but I'll keep them private.

**FM.** All of this born from a movie no one wanted to make initially.

**WC.** The studios told me it was too bloody and too weird. No one would want to see a movie about nightmares because they would know it was a dream, and nothing can happen to you in dreams.

As legendary screenwriter William Goldman says, "No one knows anything." How right he was. For all you dark dreamers out there, never give up, and never let them tell you no. Someday you may bring a legendary monster into this world that will give us all many a sleepless night. ☉



**ABOVE:** The original blueprint for Freddy's glove of blades. **RIGHT:** Robert Englund as Freddy Krueger on the set with director Wes Craven.





# THE INVISIBLE MAN

BY JEFF HASTIN

Quickly gathering speed after lurching out of the station in the middle of a snowy night, the runaway train that is James Whale's *THE INVISIBLE MAN* does not much care if it leaves some passengers in the dark.

Getting things off to a properly mysterious start, a lone man trudges through the snow, suitcase in hand. What we don't know until later is that he is a promising young chemist who has concocted a fantastic formula for invisibility. Throwing caution and all scientific protocol out the window, he tested it on himself. And it worked! But the doctor needs time to work out the antidote and his own return to visibility, and so he has come to the small British village of Iping to complete his work in quiet and solitude.

His face and hands covered in bandages, his brusque attitude intact, the doctor makes quite an impression upon the curious local residents gathered in the Lion's Head Inn. They have no idea why this mysterious stranger has arrived in the dead of winter, which is definitely considered the off-season for visitors there, but they have plenty of time of speculate as they nurse their beer and ale on the cold winter nights.

Meanwhile, the stranger's backstory is filled in. His name is Dr. Jack Griffin (played by Claude Rains), and he was working for the venerated scientist Dr. Cranley (Henry Travers, who played his most famous role as a guardian angel in Frank Capra's *IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE*). Jack was also in love with Dr. Cranley's daughter Flora (Gloria Stuart, who much later played a memorable part in James Cameron's *TITANIC*). Jack is in competition with Dr. Kemp (William Harrigan)—both for Flora's hand and the approval of Dr. Cranley.

Jack wants much more than the love of a young woman and the respect of his employer, however. Dr. Cranley granted his talented workers the opportunity to pursue their own interests on their own time, but Jack took things to an extreme, becoming obsessed with his experiments and keeping their exact nature secret from Dr. Kemp and Dr. Cranley. (Kemp, trying to sway Flora's affections, tells her, "He meddled in things men should leave alone.") Jack grew distant from Flora, spending more and more time in the lab, and neglecting his assigned work. Finally, he requested time off to complete his experiments, and Dr. Cranley agreed, still without knowing



**ABOVE:** An original one-sheet of the theatrical release of *THE INVISIBLE MAN*. **RIGHT:** From mad scientists to drowning artists, Gloria Stuart's onscreen romances never end well. **OPPOSITE LEFT:** The always entertaining Una O'Connor gives the shady eye to their mysterious houseguest. **OPPOSITE RIGHT:** A nose, by any other name...

what, exactly, Jack was doing.

Jack is away longer than expected, though, and Flora becomes frantic. Soon enough, Dr. Cranley figures out that Jack was working on a formula for invisibility based on older texts, unfortunately without knowing of more recent experiments that isolated a key ingredient (monocane) that turned test subjects mad. That lays the groundwork for Jack's behavior, which turns violent and aggressive.

Yet, even before Jack "goes mad," he has displayed a reckless disregard for the scientific method—working alone, probably because he feared the interference of others; and testing the drug on himself, manifesting an arrogance about his own capabilities. He has pushed Flora away, prizing the possibilities that his scientific achievements might bring above personal happiness. And he has abused the trust placed in him by the kindly Dr. Cranley, who continues to think the best about his prized pupil, even after Jack's personality has turned manifestly ugly—holding out hope that monocane, the wild-card ingredient, is solely responsible for the younger man's reprehensible actions.

Jack's reign of terror begins in his rented room in the Lion's Head Inn. He has reached a dead end in his research, and his frustration is compounded when the innkeeper's wife (Una O'Connor) interrupts him once again. For her part, she's had enough of his rudeness, and sends her husband upstairs to throw the

scientist out for not paying his bills. The poor man is thrown down the stairway for his troubles, prompting a visit by the local constable. Jack erupts, blaming the "fools" who have "driven him near madness." He strips off his clothing and bandaging, revealing himself in his full glory, as it were, as an invisible man, and then proceeds to strangle the constable half to death and assault a number of villagers before making his escape.

Jack hides out in the home of the shocked and awed Dr. Kemp, pressing him into service as his accomplice, and laying out his diabolical plan for world domination: "We'll begin with a reign of terror, a few murders here and there, murders of great men, murders of little men, just to show we make no distinction." Frightened, Kemp summons Dr. Cranley and Flora, and then the police, a betrayal for which he will later pay dearly. Jack is calmed by Flora's presence, but he is determined to stay the course and carry out his evil plans. His previous tendency toward megalomania has become full-blown, and he becomes a true terrorist, committing heartless mass murder and taking great joy in killing hundreds of innocent people.

It's a frightening vision, going well beyond what was imagined by H.G. Wells in his 1897 novel of the same name. Wells, who had already published *THE TIME MACHINE* and *THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU*, switched to a third-person perspective for the first time for *INVISIBLE*

*MAN*. In Wells' original version, the doctor threatened a "reign of terror," but was not successful in seriously harming anyone but himself.

Some 36 years later, however, the world had experienced the unprecedented "Great War," and seen a great deal more violence on a grander scale than even Wells could have envisioned. Audiences had flocked to see Whale's *FRANKENSTEIN* two years before, and were hungry for more rampaging monsters. As opposed to the somewhat misguided Dr. Frankenstein in that picture, Dr. Jack Griffin in *THE INVISIBLE MAN* paved the way for scientists who would stop at nothing to achieve their ends; remember, even before the full effect of the drugs kicked in, he'd displayed enough personality defects to raise concerns in the modern world.

After Jack fully gives in to his madness, he becomes a cold-blooded killer. As part of his plan, he mentions to Kemp that he intends to derail a train as proof of his power, and then later he actually follows through, laughing manically as more than a hundred souls plunge to their death. That act, by itself, set him apart from the other famous monsters of the 1930s that preceded him, such as Frankenstein, Dracula, and the Mummy. Those monsters killed people one at a time; the Invisible Man does that, too, but he also has aspirations for mass murder that must have been stunning at the time. This monster, despite his madness, also commits a premeditated murder,

slipping through a labyrinth of clever traps that have been set for him so he can carry out his promise of ending Kemp's life. And he precedes that ghastly crime by describing the pain and anguish that Kemp will experience during his final few moments. It's wicked, akin to torture, and he almost gets away with it.

Lest we forget, *THE INVISIBLE MAN* reminds us continually that its titular monster is running around killing people while absolutely naked. He must shed his clothing to avoid detection, but there is something weird and disturbing about an invisible naked man stalking about with murder in mind.

As Jack finally must acknowledge, he "meddled in things men should leave alone." Beyond the romance, beyond the shattered dreams, beyond the shocking mass murder and violence committed upon hapless individuals, however, *THE INVISIBLE MAN* is a bracing reminder that many of the greatest horrors committed by men originate within their own dark and curious souls, which should make all of us pause for thought. ☐





THE INVISIBLE ARTIST:

# JOHN P. FULTON

BY SCOTT ESSMAN

How do you elicit one of the all-time great monster movie performances when the actor's face is never visible speaking on screen? This was the challenge for James Whale in making 1933's *THE INVISIBLE MAN*, based on H.G. Wells' novel, now 80 years old and still as chilling as ever. Of course, one of Whale's true strengths was always his ability to cast his films with the most fitting possible actors. In Claude Rains, Whale had the perfect Invisible Man, not only in his ability to physically embody the character, but also in conjuring one of the great auditory performances in cinema history. Not only was Rains' deranged Invisible Man the perfect combination of intensity and psychosis, his ghoulish laugh stands as one of the most timeless cackles ever to be heard in a film.

Of course, Whale and Rains had one more ace in the hole in creating a magical and memorable Invisible Man film. It is often said that the best work done for films is indeed invisible. For even the most casual movie fan, the onscreen appearances of the characters from the Universal classics—

including *Dracula*, *Frankenstein's monster*, and the *Wolf Man*—are as indelible as they are iconic. With the "horror cycles" from the 1930s and 1940s being rediscovered with Universal's recent 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, a new generation is now able to appreciate these films in all their black-and-white glory.

Among the craftspeople at Universal who brought the entire run of films and their characters to life were Jack Pierce, the legendary makeup artist; Vera West, costume designer; and John P. Fulton, visual effects pioneer. Each of them, in fact, was unique in that these three worked on every one of the films, from *DRACULA* in 1931 to *HOUSE OF DRACULA* in 1945. Without question, their consistency in styling and attention to detail gave those films their hallmark. With Pierce and West attending to the specific characters in the films, Fulton's role was more obscure—he was tasked with developing the technology necessary to realize the films' memorable "transformation" sequences and fantastic imagery.

John Fulton was born in Nebraska

in 1902, and after his family moved to California in 1914, began his career by observing early silents in production. By the time he graduated from high school in 1920, Fulton worked as a surveyor for the Southern California Edison Company. In the 1920s, he worked as an assistant cameraman at Universal, then as a camera operator. By the dawn of sound film, he was a full-fledged cinematographer.

It is likely that Fulton learned his mastery of what was then called "trick" photography at an optical house, where he worked as a technician in the 1920s. He must have caught the attention of Carl Laemmle Jr., whose father had made him head of production at Universal in 1928. Laemmle wanted to produce film versions of acclaimed horror novels, and *DRACULA* was first on the slate.

Thus, in 1931, Fulton personally established the special effects department at the studio, creating a believable matte shot for *DRACULA* at the beginning of the film. When the coach carrying Renfield to *Dracula's castle* pulls up and we see

the castle atop a hill, the effect is a "glass shot" that Fulton expertly blended into the production. No real castle actually existed—the image of the castle is actually a painting on glass that Fulton filmed in such a way that it appeared to dwarf the actors.

Later in 1931, Fulton worked on **FRANKENSTEIN**, though much of the credit for the visual effects must be given to Kenneth Strickfaden's electrical equipment. However, in 1932, Fulton was integral to the eerie appearance of Ardash Bey, Boris Karloff's incarnation through the majority of **THE MUMMY**.

In a climatic moment in the film, Fulton's use of opticals caused Karloff's eyes to glow with a deathly white in an extreme closeup. Further use of Fulton's techniques are visible when the mummy meets his death at the film's end—one of the early uses of "lap dissolves" from one of Jack Pierce's deteriorating makeup incarnations to the next.

Despite the early evidence of his talents, Fulton's groundbreaking work on 1933's **THE INVISIBLE MAN** would earn him the industry nickname "The Doctor". Closely collaborating with **FRANKENSTEIN** cinematographer Arthur Edson, Fulton made his mark with the very first scenes of the invisible man's disrobing and revealing the background behind him. While today the effect would be

executed with relative ease using digital technology, Fulton's clever use of mattes and live-action photography provided an astonishing pretense of invisibility for the Claude Rains character. Rains likely wore a colored material under his clothes, so that when he took articles of clothing off, the color—keyed out in post production—revealed the background elements, photographed separately. This effect was further compounded by the obvious problem of black-and-white cinematography, though various shades were implemented to achieve visual effects in films at that time. Fulton also worked closely with the physical effects department to aid in the lifelike images of objects flying through the air on their own.

Following **THE INVISIBLE MAN**, which might be Fulton's early career triumph, the effects pioneer's insistence on formulating realistic effects was again put to use in 1935's **THE BRIDE OF**



**Fulton's effects hold up extremely well after 80 years. The disembodied look that he achieved is still one of the most haunting illusions to ever grace the silver screen—all done without the convenience of digital technology. Much like the villagers, audiences were terrified when faced with this technical trickery.**



**Part of what made the effect so powerful was Rains' total control over his voice. His ability to be subtle and menacing at the same time lent gravity to a floating prop or a set of footprints or empty clothes.**

FRANKENSTEIN. The comically twisted use of "miniature" people in the first sequences with Dr. Pretorius offered a chance to again use mattes and opticals to help the suspension of disbelief. Fulton also worked with the miniature department for the film's finale in which the Frankenstein castle is destroyed.

By 1937, the Laemmle reign at the studio had ended. Though the late 1930s were not as exciting a period for classic horror, in the 1940s Fulton faced new challenges in visual effects at Universal Pictures. In addition to a myriad of striking effects in 1940's *MAN MADE MONSTER* and four *INVISIBLE MAN* sequels in the early-to-mid 1940s, Fulton worked as a "special photographic effects" craftsman on all the varying monster sequels of the time. However, a 1941 film, planned originally in the early 1930s, again cemented Fulton's reputation as one of cinema's greatest visual effects artists.

Though disputed in some circles, *THE WOLF MAN* was not planned as a

Universal A-level film; however, the result was very different after all of the talent—both in front of and behind the camera—submerged themselves in the project. Working with Jack Pierce and director George Waggoner, Fulton mastered the "lap dissolves" that changed man to wolf (and back again) in the transformation sequences. The technique had been done before on film—notably in 1932's *DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE*—but Fulton's use of matching his dissolve from one stage of Pierce's makeup to the next worked seamlessly.

Fulton replicated his dissolve technique in other 1940s films featuring the Wolf Man, including *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN*, *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, and *HOUSE OF DRACULA*, but by 1948's *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN*, he was long gone from Universal, as was Pierce. Instead, Fulton worked from 1945 to 1950 as head of the effects department at the Samuel Goldwyn studio (Fulton won an

Oscar at Goldwyn for his work on 1945's *WONDER MAN*). In 1953, he became head of the special effects department at Paramount, where he won two more Oscars, for *THE BRIDGES AT TOKO-RI* in 1955 and *THE TEN COMMANDMENTS* in 1956.

By the early 1960s, Fulton worked in TV in Mexico. He moved to Spain in 1965 and began work on *THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN*. During this film, he contracted an infection which led to his death in England on July 5, 1966. His last film, released posthumously in 1968, was *THE BAMBOO SAUCER*, for which he also received a writing credit.

Though he was never awarded by the Motion Picture Academy for his work on the Universal horror films (he was nominated several times), Fulton's greatest work lives on in those pictures as he helped bring the monsters and their counterparts to life for audiences to enjoy. And *THE INVISIBLE MAN*, now 80 years old, surely stands as one of the top effects achievements of its time. ☼



# Doctors in Horror:

## THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UNSTABLE

BY ALEXANDRA WEST

Doctors put us in vulnerable situations. In order to be cured of our ailments, we must trust them. But just as there is good and evil in the general population, there are good and evil doctors—in horror movies, at least.

The trope of the insane doctor is a common one in genre films. While a monster can be outwardly threatening, a mad doctor is often cool, calculating, and deadly. They are the kind of monsters that exist internally and can change their victims at will. Classic horror films offer up interesting character morsels where the doctors are often egocentric stand-ins for their creators.

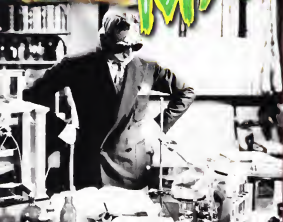
In Mary Shelley's preface to the 1831 edition of her novel

FRANKENSTEIN, she wrote, "And now, once again, I bid my hideous progeny go forth and prosper. I have an affection for it, for it was the offspring of happy days." The "happy days" Shelley refers to are the three she took her with her husband to Geneva, where the seeds of her Gothic horror classic were planted. The monster Shelley created, along with Bram Stoker's Dracula and Robert Louis Stevenson's Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, all served to give an allegorical image to fears of the age. The mad doctor can be seen as a product of a mad mind. The majority of iconic horror doctors stem from novels of the Victorian era when the field of medicine was advancing at a rapid and terrifying pace. The turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century also saw the rigid codes and conducts of the time be called into question, as medical rights and opportunities began to spread outside of the upper class.

But not all those in power were evil. Some tried to maintain the status quo in the face of technical and medical advancements. Some doctors were caught up in the thrill of advancement, but feared their creations. The Golden Age, if you will, of doctors playing significant roles in horror films was in the 1930s through the 1950s, when the monstrosity was confined to a singular event or person. Once that horror ended, normalcy was restored, and doctors played a significant role in the creation and eventual restoration of peace in the characters. And as the doctors have a role in creating the monsters, they also hold the key to subduing them, even if that means having to face themselves.

### DR. JACK GRIFFIN (THE INVISIBLE MAN, 1933)

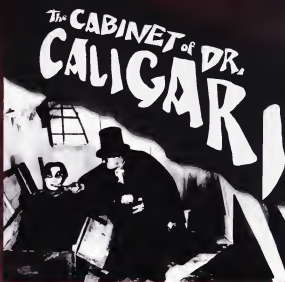
Certainly one of the most psychotic doctors on the list, Dr. Griffin went into a murderous rage brought upon by his drug monomania, with which he dosed himself to become invisible. Dr. Griffin's journey was emblematic of one of the central questions of the Victorian era: whether man could be allowed live his life of his own free will or if he remains subject to society's wills and expectations. When Griffin becomes invisible, he is freed from social restraints and reacts with madness. Once liberated, he is unable to control his impulses, circling back to the Victorian fear of a lack of control leading to the destruction of society—which caused many writers of the time to try to reconcile the ongoing debate between human and societal nature.





DR. CALIGARI (THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI, 1920)

Dr. Caligari is unique because he takes two forms: one of a murderous hypnotist, and the other of a legitimate doctor treating a patient—a drastic change in narrative which is only revealed at the end of the film and is often cited as being the first twist ending on celluloid. Dr. Caligari exemplifies the duality with which we handle the release of control over our bodies. While we must trust a doctor to treat us, we can't always be sure that they are using the best methods and most appropriate pills to help us get better. All we can do is have faith and hope they don't employ a sleepwalker with a penchant for murder and destruction.



DR. FRANKENSTEIN (THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN, 1957)

Another tortured soul, Victor Frankenstein is the epitome of a go-big-or-go-home mentality. While most of us are familiar with the Frankenstein Monster, it is actually Victor Frankenstein who seeks to create life after his mother's untimely passing. But, as these things go, the plan backfires, and the Monster winds up causing more destruction and death than intended. Dr. Frankenstein provides one of the most cautionary tales in literature and film—that man is not meant to control or create life. He realizes that his creation, which serves to placate his own fear of death and loss of control, is a dangerous thing. While popular culture has labelled Frankenstein a “mad scientist”, within the realm of Mary Shelley’s novel he is much more of a tragic figure: a doctor who wanted to change the world for the better, but in the madness of his own hubris, wound up destroying a part of it.

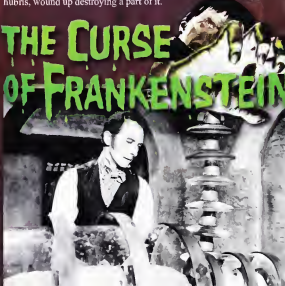
# THE ABOMINABLE DR. PHIBES



DR. PHIBES (THE ABOMINABLE DR. PHIBES, 1971)

It's no secret that doctors can fall prey to the God complex. When Dr. Phibes' beloved wife dies after complications from an operation, he becomes convinced that it was the attending doctor's incompetence that caused her death and sets about plotting his revenge. After faking his own death, he uses the ten plagues of Egypt as inspiration to dispatch with other doctors. Phibes is an unusual case, as he is unbelievably cruel in his murders of the other doctors but is still infallibly charming and watchable, thanks in large part to the casting of the singular Vincent Price. While our sympathies are meant to lie with Phibes, Robert Fuest's direction happily complicates this notion as Phibes' monstrosity grows with each kill. Within the throes of vengeance, we are able to see the humanity behind Phibes' bedside manner, which may be the most impressive depiction of character duality in classic horror.

# THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN





DR. JEKYLL (DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE, 1931)

Sometimes the only way to learn is to practice. While Dr. Jekyll is a mild-mannered scientist, he doses himself with a potion that turns him into a homicidal maniac—as these potions tended to at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Dr. Jekyll is convinced that there is good and evil within every man, and seeks to prove it through developing a drug that causes rapid mood and impulse shifts. Interestingly, Jekyll has lived with these impulses for most of his life, but felt they were unbecoming to a man of his stature. The special expertise granted to these doctors often makes them the perfect villains. Because their profession means they have gone to university, a privilege then only allotted to the elite, they are often above suspicion, allowing them to wreak havoc on the unsuspecting masses until it becomes clear that they are the cause of the chaos. It was these stories that helped scrub off the classist veneer held so dearly by the Victorian era.

# HORROR OF DRACULA



DR. VAN HELSING (THE HORROR OF DRACULA, 1958)

While only a supporting character in Bram Stoker's iconic DRACULA, Van Helsing nevertheless holds knowledge and the key to subduing the monster. Hammer's THE HORROR OF DRACULA presents the most interesting portrayal of the doctor as he becomes the film's protagonist after having to dispense with Jonathan Harker. It is Peter Cushing's Van Helsing who must travel to London to defeat Dracula. Made at the beginning of Hammer's dominance over the horror genre, THE HORROR OF DRACULA is a visceral film, with Christopher Lee's charming and enigmatic Count at the center. But it is Cushing's portrayal of Van Helsing as calm, cool, and collected that work so perfectly in opposition to Dracula's bombastic nature. He is the emblem of maintaining his cool while chaos reigns around him. As the other characters are whipped into a frenzy by Dracula's presence, Van Helsing's reassuring nature calms the audience with the knowledge that order will be restored in time for tea. ☺



# BEAST IN THE WORLD

by Ed Blair

**WWE** Superstar CM Punk is a person who's always worked hard to be true to himself, to achieve success on his own terms. CM Punk isn't a character. He's a wrestler who allows his hobbies and passions to bleed through and inspire his career. Always outspoken, Punk is never shy in letting the world know who he is and what he stands for. Whether it be his hometown of Chicago, punk music, Gracie Jiu Jitsu, comic books, clean living, MMA, or proper grammar, CM Punk wears his passions on his sleeve. But one thing that's been with him longer than most of the others is his love of classic monsters.

Within minutes of meeting Punk at the legendary Beverly Hills Hotel, he's already pulled back his shirt sleeve to reveal a tattoo of a familiar face. "Creech. That's my guy. He's misunderstood, just like me." He then enthusiastically recounts a story of running into Rick Baker. "No, I actually ran right into him, walking around a corner." CM Punk, a professional wrestler who's held almost every major championship the Sports Entertainment world has to offer, is a Monster Kid just like the rest of us.



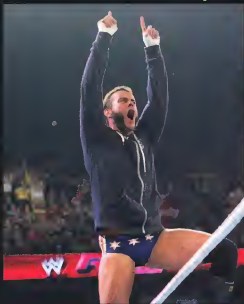
**Famous Monsters.** Where did your love of horror and monsters begin and, more importantly, was it a positive experience for you?

**CM Punk.** It's one of my earliest memories. I remember being scared of this book that was in my grandpa's house. It was my aunt's book and it had an orange cover; it was a movie monster book—this is the early eighties—and the monsters they were talking about were the early Universal monsters: Frankenstein, Phantom of the Opera, Creature. There was one picture in there—and I didn't know what it was at the

time, I just knew I was scared of it—of Lon Chaney in *LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT*, where he looks like the vampire and he's in front of a door with the top hat and the sharp teeth and claws. And the door he was in front of looked exactly like a door in my grandpa's room. [laughs] So for the longest time I thought Lon Chaney lived in my grandfather's closet. I was terrified of this picture, but I still couldn't put the book down. And I've always been drawn to that; the fact that it scared the hell out of me as a little kid. I don't know if it was something to do with trying to conquer that

fear or what, but you get older and all these slasher films come out and your parents were telling you that you weren't allowed to watch them. So what do you do? You watch them.

**FM.** It was the kind of real, visceral response you were having to the movies and the monsters that drew you in?



**CMP.** Yeah. I think that fear is one of the first things you understand when you're a kid. You may not be able to watch these epic movies and understand all the things the directors were trying to convey, but you can feel the fear. I think watching these movies, aside from it being taboo, I got such a rise out of them and they got my heart rate going. And the cool imagery. It was all of that.

**FM.** Once you started exploring the genre, were there any particular films you were drawn to, like *Universal* or *Hammer* or *AIP*?



**CMP.** I think my default is the slasher stuff because that was right around time I was six to eight years old—early 80s—Jason, Freddy, HALLOWEEN. My favorite horror movie of all time is John Carpenter's HALLOWEEN. I immediately did my homework and went back to watch the originals. You know, you go back and start watching the black and white, or you read a John Carpenter interview and he cites [THE THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD] as one of his favorites. And it just kind of branched out from there. I like a good cerebral horror movie, one that makes you think. Blood and guts isn't really my thing. Torture horror movies I'm not so much into. But I think those movies are my default because that's what lined the video store walls at the time. I just rented everything, partly because I wasn't allowed to. But I watched everything that video store had to offer.

**FM.** You certainly seem to have expanded beyond slashers. I remember you tweeted after a Chicago pay per view that you were at home recovering by watching classic DARK SHADOWS episodes.

**CMP.** My aunt, who was closer to my age than she was to my mom's age, got me hooked on DARK SHADOWS when I was a little kid. Classic DARK SHADOWS with Jonathan Frid, that stuff was a trip.

**FM.** You mentioned that HALLOWEEN

was your favorite film. But a few years ago you dressed up like Jack Burton from BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE CHINA. You've parodied the "bubble gum" line from THEY LIVE. Referencing John Carpenter seems to be a thread that runs through your personal and professional lives.

**CMP.** Definitely. I don't get excited about much anymore. There's not a lot of people that I would go out of my way to meet. John Carpenter is one of those guys that I would love to BS with over some lunch. Everything that he's done I'm a huge fan of. He is definitely someone that I really look up to.

**FM.** And he's a big wrestling fan, too.

**CMP.** [Laughs] I actually didn't know that. Then I say we make a BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE CHINA Part 2!

**FM.** Now that is an idea I can get behind! Aside from just the movies, I've seen interviews with you and heard stories where it appears you're putting together a nice little collection of monster artwork and memorabilia for yourself.

**CMP.** The early tragedy that happened to me was that when I was a kid, my room was nothing but horror movie posters. And I had some classics. There used to be a place in walking distance called MPM Video, and I used to just pester and bug the hell out of the guy that worked there and owned it. I had rented every single

movie and I would just go there and hang out. You name the movie, I had it. I had some great vintage stuff. But one day my mom tore my room apart and threw it all out because—and I quote—she was afraid she was "raising a serial killer." It bums me out that I don't have a lot of that stuff any more. But I do have some cool stuff. I don't try to pursue it too much because I look on eBay and I know that I'd be spending a lot of money and have a lot of stuff just kind of sitting around my house. I have a DREAM WARRIORS [NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET 3] poster that I was able to salvage. There are a couple of the old posters that I still have. They're a little beat up, but they're also nothing that I would sell, either. They're mostly just good memories.

**FM.** Collecting for you, then, is more of something you do for personal reasons, not because you're looking to make a buck or keep a piece as an investment.

**CMP.** I'm definitely not looking into being an investor. There are no pictures hanging in my house. The only thing I have are several portraits painted of Bride of Frankenstein, Vincent Price, the Wolf Man, and the Invisible Man. I get all of that from an artist in L.A. named D.W. Frydendall. He's amazing. I walked into a little art store in Burbank one day and said, "Ah, I'm gonna spend a lot of money in this place."

**FM.** You have a bus that you do most of your traveling in. Do you have a default movie that you put on when you're just in the mood to watch something?

**CMP.** A lot of times what happens is that we'll be driving to a show, and I'll scan the next five to ten hours of what's on the movie channels and record a bunch of stuff so that I have it later. A lot of times they're horror movies, or Sci-Fi. That's how you end up watching BLADE RUNNER five times in a row. I've recently gotten into Mario Bava and I've got a few of his movies on the bus waiting for my six-hour ride tonight. I could watch HALLOWEEN 1 and 2 on a loop. Every October—and I think a lot of people do this, well, at least the cool people—I watch a horror movie every day. I'll watch the entire FRIDAY THE 13TH box set and fun stuff like that.

**FM.** What about horror literature? Do you enjoy classics like Lovecraft or the contemporary greats like King?

**CMP.** Oh, yeah. I used to pride myself

when I was a kid at how fast I could read Stephen King books. I still have them all. *THE STAND* is one of my all time favorite novels. Everything seems to be kind of connected in my life. I'm a big comic book guy, too, and Stephen King's son, Joe Hill, is writing this epic comic book called *LOCKE & KEY*. It always seems to come back to horror for me. When it comes to comics it's all about who's writing. There have been a lot of great horror comics lately. Scott Snyder did a one-off called *SEVERED* that was really good. I get a kick out of all the old EC Comics, like the Crypt-Keeper and *TALES FROM THE CRYPT*. There's something romantic about those things, especially because they're part of the reason that comics got cracked down on and the Comic Book Code was invented. Bernie Wrightson is an amazing comic book

illustrator who did *SWAMP THING*.

**FM.** After all these years, what is it that keeps bringing you back to these stories? Is it still the fear factor or the taboo nature? Is it the appeal to being an outsider?

**CM Punk.** It's the bad guys. It's the evil. Being a bad guy is a lot more fun—I know it is in my business, I think humanity as a whole, societies, have always been drawn to evil. There's just something about it that's magnetizing. I enjoy Michael Myers. I get a kick out of Jason Voorhees. There's just something about these pure evil characters. I think that's why I like *HALLOWEEN* most of all. You're not supposed to understand what Michael Myers is. If you just watch *HALLOWEEN* as a standalone movie, it's brilliant. It's a masterpiece. They don't try to explain it. It's just pure evil. And you've got Loomis [Donald

Pleasance] running around trying to tell people that. And he seems to be the only guy who gets it. No, there's no reasoning with him. You can't put him in a hospital. You can't fix what's wrong with him. There's no cure. He's evil and you need to stop him. There's something about it that keeps me up at night. ☹

*CM Punk can be found every Monday on the USA network on WWE's MONDAY NIGHT RAW and is featured in the upcoming video game WWE 2K14. He also has his own show on Youtube called GRAMMAR SLAM where he teaches fans about proper usage of the English language using tweets from some of his kss grammar-inclined Twitter followers.*

*Follow CM Punk on Twitter: @CMPunk*







by Dan Madigan

Sam Livingston and I were both ten years old when we saw our first issue of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* magazine. It was love at first sight. We were hooked. We found ourselves trapped in a world of horror movies and monsters that we didn't want to find an escape from. For the two of us there were only two things that mattered: horror movies... and wrestling.

Yup, wrestling. Professional wrestling. *Wrasslin'*. Sports Entertainment. Whatever you want to call it—we've all seen it. We all know what it is. Some folks may have a just a passing uninterested knowledge of "The Business", while others are die-hard loyal fans of the profession. But whether you're an uneducated observer or erudite expert, there is no denying that society in general knows what wrestling is about. Names like The Undertaker, Hulk Hogan, Stone Cold Steve Austin, Sting, and Andre the Giant are synonymous with the larger-than-life world of American professional wrestling. But what about our friends south of the border? What is the Mexican equivalent of pro wrestling?

If you don't know, or just want a quick

refresher, the Mexican style of wrestling is known as *lucha libre* (roughly translated as "free fighting"). Lucha Libre is a high-flying, over-the-top, out-of-this-world journey into the *fantastique*. Although the action takes place in the ring as American wrestling does and basically boils down to good guy versus bad guy (in America the hero is a babyface and the bad guy a heel; in Mexico the hero is called a *técnico* and the villain is a *rudo*), the stories and characters in the world of *lucha libre* are a special breed unto themselves.

How do we make this visually explosive cocktail that is *lucha libre*? Take one part comic book, one part adventure story, a dash of the daring, a scoop of the strange, pour into a martini shaker... shake, shake, shake well... and KA-BOOM! Your *lucha libre* libation is ready to pour so the masses can drink it up. To say that the fans in Mexico are intoxicatingly passionate about their wrestling would be a tremendous understatement: they are *beyond* passionate, many bordering on obsessed, walking that razor thin line between rabid and frenzied. And they have every reason

to be enthralled with *lucha libre*, because it is from within those ranks that some of the greatest names of pro wrestling have come.

To make this *Lucha Libre 101* presentation a little easier to follow, I want to keep our focus on the *masked* wrestlers of *lucha*. While every participant that wrestles in Mexico is called a *luchador*, a masked wrestler is known as an *enmascarado*. And the role call of *enmascarados* that have appeared in Mexico is faded; however, there are two standouts that have transcended the fame of the ring: El Santo and Blue Demon.

It is wise to get a full understanding of what worlds these men inhabited. When someone sits down to watch a wrestling show on television, or if they are lucky enough to attend a live event, the first thing to do is take away any notion that you have entered a world of rational thought. You've got to disregard any semblance of coherent thinking, suspend your disbelief to the point of openly accepting the insane, kick back, and enjoy the show. Because that is what wrestling is all about: putting on a show. And *lucha libre* has prided itself for



**SANTO**

**"EL ENMASCARADO  
DE PLATA"**

**CLAUDIO BROOK  
RUBEN ROJO  
NORMA MORA  
ROXANA BELLINI**

*en*

**SANTO**

**EN**

**EL MUSEO de CERA**

**Dirección:  
ALFONSO CORONA BLAKE**



"IT IS JOSEPH CAMPBELL'S 'HERO'S JOURNEY', EXCEPT ODYSSEUS IS NOW AN ENMASCARADO AND HAS PLANNED OUT HIS TREK HOME THROUGH A ROGUES GALLERY OF MASKED MONSTERS."

over seventy years of putting on some of the best, most intense shows around.

If you think about it, the story told in the wrestling ring is not that far removed from cinema (or the comic book panel). Intense theatrics. Conflict. Drama. Betrayal. Good vs. Evil. It is Joseph Campbell's "Hero's Journey", except Odysseus is now an *enmascarado* and has planned out his trek home through a rogues gallery of masked monsters. Professional wrestling has its mythology, but *lucha libre* has its own unique folklore. It draws from the indigenous legends of Mexico and , cultivating homegrown myths that the person sitting in the audience can relate to in some way.

All the elements for telling a good story are present in any decent *lucha libre* match, so it is not a far leap of faith to jump from the wrestling mat to the movie screen. And that way of thinking was not lost on movie producers in Mexico. Any article about *lucha libre* worth its salt would be remiss if it didn't give at least a passing nod to Don Salvador Lutteroth. He was the mastermind behind promoting and creating some of the greatest characters in the history of the sport. Like Vince McMahon Jr.'s transformation of American pro wrestling, Lutteroth's contributions to the sport cannot be measured, but it's easy to say that without him, the sport may not have flourished and grown to the international phenomenon it is today. If

not for Lutteroth's hindsight and business acumen as promoter and owner of CMLL (*Consejo Mundial de Lucha Libre*), *lucha libre* would not be what it is today, and it is a pretty fair bet that the characters El Santo and Blue Demon may never have existed.

## THE ONE-TWO PUNCH

Coming out of the Lon Chaney-dominated era of silent horror films in the thirties, Universal Studios hit a movie gold mine in 1931 with not one, but two, tales of terror that have become cinematic legends: Tod Browning's *DRACULA* and James Whale's *FRANKENSTEIN*. Not only did these movies set what would be the standard for Universal horror films for the next decade, but they also catapulted two veteran actors into international acclaim. Bela Lugosi as Dracula and Boris Karloff as Frankenstein's Monster have become synonymous with horror movie excellence; and the number of films that they appeared in alone or together is staggering. Clearly if one horror star is popular, then two has to be better.

England's Hammer Studios in the late fifties had the same mindset that Universal had in the early thirties. Acting legends Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee actually redefined the traditional horror movies with their portrayals of classic cinematic characters—Dracula, Dr. Van Helsing, The Mummy, Dr. Frankenstein and his hellish

**BLUE DEMON**  
**ELSA CARDENAS**  
**MIL MASCARAS**  
SENSACIONAL ACTUACION DE **SANTO**

Juan Gullardo - Patricia Ferrer - Carlos Suarez - Yolanda Ponce  
Carlos Lago - Jorge Pinguino - Mabelo Lano - Martha Regalado  
y presentacion del actor **JULIO CESAR**

**LAS MOMIAS DE**  
**GUANAJUATO**



creation, all had new life breathed into their tired souls by this dynamic British duo. Once again the old adage was true: if one was good, then two had to be better.

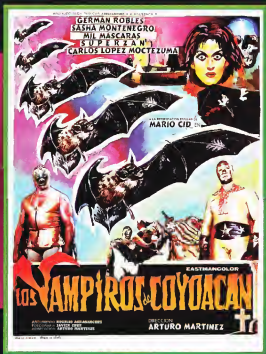
And that One-Two Punch combo was never more evident than with the birth of the lucha libre/horror films that first appeared South-of-the-Border in the fifties. If *uno* lucha libre movie star was good, then *dos* was *muy bueno*. And with that the *enmascarado* pairing of El Santo and Blue Demon became the stuff that legends are made of.

It is worth noting that the two biggest stars of lucha libre cinema were not the firsts. Beginning in the fifties, a series of lucha libre films appeared in Mexico have been the biggest name in the Mexican wrestling world at the time, but what many consider to be the first lucha libre movie featured fellow *enmascarado* Médico Asesino who starred in *El Enmascarado de Plata*. The second *enmascarado* to appear before the camera was Huraacán Ramírez (although this character was created for the screen and portrayed by wrestler Eduardo Bonada, the Huraacán Ramírez persona

would be carried out in the ring by luchador Daniel García).

But once El Santo stepped in front of the camera, all bets were off. His popularity soared into the cinematic stratosphere in the late fifties and was going strong into the early eighties. The films of El Santo would read like a litany of out-of-this-world scenarios. Who else but a pro wrestler would local authorities, police, and befuddled scientists call on for assistance when the world was in danger from sinister supernatural forces? Santo's aptly named colorful counterpart and masked colleague was Blue Demon. After having a few glamorized cameos in the early sixties, Demon hit his stride in the 1964 film *El Demonio Azul*. Not only did Blue Demon have to battle nasty diabolic women and infernal spiders, he also found himself against the powers of Satan himself. Simply put, the winning equation is thus: masked hero + monsters = money. No matter what other worldly evil was ready to strike out against mankind, neither the living nor the living dead were any match for these two.

What is of great interest with the Santo/



Blue Demon cinematic collaboration is how the producers took a page of out the Hammer Studios playbook by not inventing new horror characters but by using the time-honored classic creatures such as Dracula, the Wolfman, and Dr. Frankenstein, and pitting them against Mexico's own recently created superheroes. In a way, it was showing the world that Mexico's deeply beloved cultural icons were just as good, if not better, than the fabled European legends and myths. If Mexico could not compete with Europe on a economic playing field, then they surely could best them when it was their heroes against Europe's villains on screen.

If you can dig that a man with mask can step into a ring and battle another masked man, if you can let your imagination run wild and appreciate the controlled mayhem and colorful majesty of lucha libre and see how the natural progression of these elements organically metamorphose into cinematic surrealism, then amigo, the magazine you are holding in your hand is one you will enjoy—in just the way Sam Livingston and I enjoyed it a lifetime ago. ☺

# ENTER THE LUCHA-HEROES

## MAKING SENSE OF MASKS AND MONSTERS IN MOVIES

BY KEITH J. RAINVILLE



**Y**eah, it's the suit and tie.  
*The masked wrestler... in a suit and tie.*

The world is overrun with mega-superhero movies now, and these wheel-spinners, armored playboys, and shield-slingers fight alien creatures and all that, sure. But the Mexican superheroes did it with *parache...* *In formal wear.* A seamless, effortless integration of superhero persona and jet-set fashion.

The *outré*, but somehow completely natural, idea of the professional grappler walking through polite society in a fancy suit and his signature hood assaults both senses and sensibilities. The Mexican masked wrestler superhero, or "lucha-hero", is like some defector from another reality seeking diplomatic immunity in our world. But rather than pull off that weird mask in his off-hours and fit right in with the rest of us, this refugee from the incognito zone has chosen instead to

match his suit and tie to his hood and sit right there in the cabaret with a hot date like any other player. That is what sets this strange old film genre apart from the rest of superhero cinema.

This *enmascarado* is part of a different species, living among us but on his own masked terms. And fortunately, he's on our side, because there's a werewolf around the corner... and he's been doing push-ups.

American superheroes have secret identities and day jobs. Japanese heroes tend to be anonymous urbanites waiting around until some monster-of-the-week attacks their city, finally giving them the excuse to "power-up" into their bigger, better selves.

The Mexican crime crusaders and creature cripplers need none of that.

No complications, no back stories, no excuses to duck into a phone booth, transform into someone else, and only then get down to business. Santo was

Santo. Blue Demon was Blue Demon. When the bell rings, they fight in the ring, and when vampires burst into a room, some other monster-fighter bell only they can hear rings, summoning them to do what for this breed apart is a simple side gig—*save the day*.

It is probably this simplicity of character that has given these movies a cult following in other countries for 50+ years now. The lucha-hero is not a complex, reluctant savior with an hour-long origin story, nor a tortured loner unable to resist get pulled into a world-threatening adventure. He's simply the guy you call when zombies are kidnapping co-eds for their mad scientist master. Yeah, that's him—right over there in the white tuxedo, silk scarf, and silver head mask... just point him in the right direction; he takes care of the rest.

It all started in the early 1950s with filmmakers cashing in on popular comic book heroes, namely El Santo, whose



TALABAR TERIA  
DEL REAL  
REYNALDO Y TROMBOSERAS  
DEL REAL

## SANTO ZOMBIE SMASH!

photo-based adventure pulps sold millions of copies per week. Several masked wrestler heroes had starred in Republic serial-like adventures before, but when the silver-masked man made the leap to silver screen superhero in the late 1950s, a genre was cemented.

For the film producers, the ring stars were solid gold. They brought their own built-in fan bases into theaters; then, every time they entered the ring, it was free PR for the next picture. And for, shall we say, *budget-conscious* studios, these cats already had their own costuming and could bring friends from the locker room to co-star as soon-to-be-slapped-around thugs. No trainers, choreographers, or fight doubles needed. They were a huge production shortcut.

It was just as lucrative a deal for the grapplers. A hit movie in the theaters meant they could raise their rates to wrestling promoters, who in turn could fill bigger

arenas by featuring a movie star. Then later, as the ring stars aged and their main event glow faded a bit, these programmer-like films acted as retirement plans. In the case of Blue Demon, his film career only came about when a severe ring injury put him on the shelf for a year, and he brought home the bacon by battling Wolfman and Mummy knock-offs during his recovery.

Lucha-heroes battled monsters, criminals, and each other in over 125 films through the end of the 1970s. By sheer numbers, the genre aspired to prolific niche film categories like *peplum* (gladiator movies) and Spaghetti Westerns. These masked adventures were as ingrained in the Latin world as kung-fu films were in China.

In the decades since they were in Spanish-market theaters, the Lucha-hero films found new life on the American drive-in theater circuit thanks to prolific distributor K. Gordon Murray. His dubbed prints of films with new titles like SAMSON VS

THE VAMPIRE WOMEN continued to find new audiences into the 80s thanks to the efforts of Johnny Legend and ilk on late-night cable. The films were spread via VHS tape trading boards in the earliest days of the internet, then became catalog staples of companies like Something Weird Video. Some saw Criterion-level DVD releases in the 90s, subtitled for the very first time, and others are getting remastered for Bluray right now. Creature kids on every continent have been a secondary market for these films for 50 years, and with lucha-hero iconography continuing to influence outsider art, cartoons, comics, punk and surf bands, toys and kitsch, and even Madison Avenue advertising campaigns, it seems there's no end in sight.

If you have the basic notion of the lucha-hero down but want to take your fandom to the next level, here are some quick facts to guide your hunt for masked cinema gold...

**LUCHA-HERO CINEMA  
BASICALLY BREAKS DOWN  
INTO TWO ERAS WITH TWO  
DISTINCT FLAVORS—B&W  
AND COLOR.**

**The Black & White Era:** Even though they span the mid 1950s to the late 60s, the B&W lucha-hero flicks almost feel stuck in a vague 1940s-ness, often feeling a lot older than they are. Maybe it's the cars and fashions being a bit behind-the-times, or the fact that older cabaret and jazz club footage was inserted in these movies to pad the running time. The B&Ws sort of watch like Republic serials, Universal Monster classics, and AIP drive-in creature features all at once. There's some excellently moody cinematography and bombastic brassy scores around threats like bombshell vampire women and sewer-dwelling Phantom of the Opera knock-offs.

Stars like Santo, Blue Demon, and Wolf Ruvinkis as the black-masked Neutron

were at their physical peaks (you could consider it the "shirts-off era"), seen most often in their full ring gear with capes trailing in the wind as they toolled around in two-seater convertibles.

**The Color Era:** By the 1970s, vets like Santo and Blue went into more casual modes, fighting creatures and crooks in smoking jackets, turtle-necks and suits with wider and wider lapels and ties. Everyone's color coordination went a little crazy, too. But a younger pack of stars like Mil Mascaras and space-faring giant El Tinieblas—creations of legendary publisher/promoter/designer Valente Perez—gave the genre new blood, and their more complex masks looked amazing in color.

The filmmaking sensibilities turned more to Hammer and Amicus studios in feel, but sadly, with the budgets of a Larry Buchanan or Al Adamson. The result is increasing schlock, but also increasing psychotronics—amazing on-screen mutations of filmmaking craft and basic

storytelling brought about by the radiation of the plummeting production budget. The head-slapping final products can be a real joy to behold. Ever wondered what an Ed Wood set would have looked like in glorious color? Like your mad scientist labs as cheesy as possible? If you're down with the Blood Island flicks and weirdness on a scale of THE ZAAT, then the 70s stuff is right up your alley.

The music of this era is also especially curious. Orchestras gave way to rock bands, but with accordions and skating rink organs along for the ride. There's plenty of minimalist experimental stuff, too, not far off to what was coming out of Jean Rollin films at the same time.

**THE LUCHA-HERO FILMS  
COMPRISE THE WORLD'S  
MOST UNIQUE AND YET LEAST  
ORIGINAL FILM GENRE. THAT  
IS THEIR TRUE STRENGTH.**

Beyond the notion of a jet-set hooded hero fighting lizard men, don't look for ideas as outré as the stars. The sublime genius of the genre lies in the practice of injecting the masked men and their squared-circle lifestyles into other well-established hit movie trends with a cinematic turkey baster. Santo waged war on gangsters like a Elliot Ness, rode in weird Westerns, conquered jungles like Tarzan, used his scientific expertise to take on flying saucers... whatever some other studio in some other country had made a dime with recently was the next contender for the silver masked box office champion.

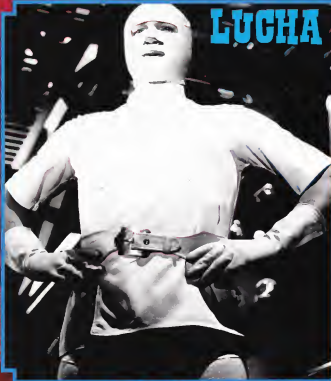
The choices defied logic. Many ignored logic, or had never heard of it. Santo was cast more than once as a Mexican Man from UNCLE in Bond-esque spy flicks. *Think about that.* Is there a worse secret agent than the world's most famous masked wrestler? And did he remove the hood to go undercover? Of course not!



**FLYING FOOT CHOKE!**



# LUCHA HERO POSE!



**OPPOSITE PAGE:** Even in his finest attire, Santo isn't afraid to bring the fight to Frankenstein's Monster via flying foot choke with a little help from the local flora.

**LEFT:** The Dr. Is In! Dr. Karonte prepares to put the hurt on all who dare challenge him.

## LUCHA-HERO CINEMA IS AN INVALUABLE TIME CAPSULE OF VINTAGE MEXICAN WRESTLING.

Like most exploitation cinema, these films relied on padding to keep running time up and budgets low, and in lucha-hero movies that padding comes in the form of complete wrestling matches—much the same way a Frankie & Annette beach movie would be filled out with guest musical acts. Bouts were either staged in studios with spliced-in stock footage of crowds going wild, or the cameras were rolling in actual arenas during historic cards.

The tradition went back to the 50s, when there was little TV coverage of wrestling, and seeing ring action was a big bonus for theater patrons. Within the confines of the movie's editorial, the logic for such scenes lied in the fact that the masked men weren't full-time justice fighters, they were merely moonlighting as man's saviors. Blue Demon or Mil Mascaras might have been on the verge of catching a terrorist threatening the city with stolen nukes, but if there was a match scheduled that night, they were at the arena, period! Aliens and monsters were one thing, but a scorned fight promoter was a far more fearsome beast.

Time (and a few tragic fires and earthquakes) have not been kind to the archival process of decades of Mexican ring sports, so these wrestling scenes represent some of the only high quality footage of the legends of *lucha libre* at their peaks. If you want to see the only surviving footage of one of Mexico's most storied matches, Santo beating and unmasking the legendary Black Shadow, you'll need to see *Santo contra los Zombies*.

## YOU WILL DISCOVER A WEIRD VERSION OF YOUR FAVORITE MONSTER YOU NEVER KNEW EXISTED.

With filmmakers sewing together luchadores and other idioms so shamelessly, you get some pretty amazing cross-genre Fiji mermaids. Ever see a werewolf in wrestling tights? It happens more than once in lucha-hero cinema, with Martians, zombies, and vampires following suit.

Then there are the "non-union-equivalents" and outright mutated knock-offs of famous properties. Mexican vampires came in both Lugosi and Lee varieties, with a LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT-er thrown in for variety. Their "Frankenstein" had a messy mop-top and beatnik goatee, and drove a getaway car for other monsters. Other Frankie's monsters ranked right along with Hammer's biggest and weirdest, and met ends just as gory and grisly. Werewolves ranged from outright Universal bootlegs to blond-maned buxom women to creepy hunched-over fanged freaks who looked more like the Fabulous Furry Freak Brothers.

For zombie completists, a half-dozen or so movies were shot in the 70s that never made it into any of your complete guides or encyclopedias of the walking dead genre. Seek out *Las momias de Guanajuato* and its sequels. Don't let that "mummy" word fool you, either—in Mexico it was synonymous with the desiccated shambling zombie, with make-up work a decade ahead of what would later come from Spain, the US, and Italy.





# DEMON PUNCH!!

NEVER LET LANGUAGE BE  
A BARRIER!

In closing, let the non-Spanish speaker (not unlike this very author) be assured that this genre is easy to dive into. The DVD era provided several subtitled prints of the better entries in the field, and some of the older English dubs are floating around the interwebs, too.

But don't let a Spanish-only print of a movie stop you. These films watch the same way old Golden Age comics read. They are simple—almost primal—good-vs.-evil stories, executed in a family-friendly way.

And sometimes, the head-spinning lapses in logic and journeys to the bizarre are even more surreal when you have no clue what the dialogue is even attempting to explain. You don't need to know why a shirtless Santo is walking around on the moon, sans space helmet, wrestling a giant man-eating blob. You just need to go along for the ride.

And you need to go along for the ride. ☺

*Author of ZOMBI MEXICANO: FOREIGN ZOMBIE MOVIES OF THE 70s YOU NEVER KNEW EXISTED AND WHY, and screenwriter of the animated feature film Los Campeones de la Lucha Libre, Keith J. Rainville has published masked wrestler-related media since 1995 through his From Parts Unknown imprint.*

# THOSE WHO FIGHT MONSTERS

## A HANDY GUIDE TO LUCHA CINEMA'S HEAVY HITTERS

By TODD STADTMAN

I think it's safe to say that of the people in my own United States, most aware of the Mexican wrestling legend El Santo are so enlightened as a result of the dubbed versions of his films that made their way to videos and television. This awareness, however, represents a kind of "backing in" to the whole Santo phenomenon—as in his native Mexico, those films were much less the *cause* of his enormous fame than they were *byproducts* of it, coming at the midpoint of a long and uproariously successful career.

In much the same way, seeing those Santo films as peculiar novelties—as many "gringos" do—betrays the breadth of lucha libre cinema as a whole. True, El Santo was the inarguable king of the genre, but growing demand among the Mexican public quickly became more than one luchadore could handle. As a result, a whole raft of cryptid clobbering masked wrestlers was deployed to fill the gap, most of them drawn from real life practitioners in the ring.

To get you up to speed, here is a handy guide to the key players, starting, of course, with...

### EL SANTO

Born Rodolfo Guzman Huerta, El Santo forged a path to superstardom that took its share of twists and turns—including, under a variety of names, fighting sans mask and, on occasion, playing the part of a bad guy, or *rudo*. But it was not until the early 1940s that, with the mask and moniker of El Santo ("The Saint"), he was set on the road to becoming one of the most revered figures in not just lucha libre, but Mexican professional sports.

Given that Santo is hands down the most recognizable and prolific of all lucha film stars, it may surprise that he was not also the first. This does not mean, however, that he wasn't a key figure in the genre's birth. In 1952, he was presented with the opportunity to star in a twelve-part serial titled *El Enmascarado de Plata* (THE SILVER MASK), a film so clearly conceived with him in mind that it bore his secondary ring title and included Jose G. Cruz, author of the popular Santo comics, among its writers. Santo, nonetheless, turned the picture down, and was replaced by a rival wrestler, El Medico Asesino, as the hero. The chapter play went on to become one of the earliest and purist examples of Mexican wrestling cinema, albeit a monster-free one.

For whatever reasons, Santo's stance toward being immortalized on screen had softened by 1958, when he agreed to appear in a pair of hastily-made thrillers for producer Enrique J. Zambrano. The template for the classic Santo film, however, would not be set until 1961, when he made *SANTO VS. THE ZOMBIES* (*Santo contra los Zombies*, released to U.S. TV as "Invasion of the Zombies"), a film in which he battles a mad scientist's army of remote-controlled zombies. That template would arguably be perfected with the next year's *SANTO VS. THE VAMPIRE WOMEN* (*Santo contra las*





# SANTO

*Mujeres Vampiros*, released to U.S. TV as "Samson vs. The Vampire Women"), an inspired combination of gothic horror and breathless, Republic serial-style action.

The portrayal of Santo in these movies, while perhaps on the corny side, is indicative of the esteem in which he was held by his multitude of fans. He was not just a man of might, but a superheroic renaissance man—equal parts Batman, Superman, James Bond, and Sherlock Holmes—who was just as capable of pinning down the location of a villain's lair by eyeballing a soil sample as he was of hurling an ape-like minion through a wall. This is also reflected in his choice of foes, which increasingly were culled from the supernatural realm, as if no mere mortal could present enough of a challenge to our hero. To further bolster this intimidating, all-around macho man image, he was equipped with both a super scientific laboratory and a sweet sports car.

Despite his reticent beginnings, Santo stuck with lucha cinema longer than most of his contemporaries, making his final film, *THE FURY OF THE KARATE EXPERTS* (*La Furia de los Karatecas*) just three years before his death in 1981. This means that he hung tough through the meager years of the 1970s, when budgets for lucha films dropped along with audience interest. Typical Santo films during this period still covered a wide range of genres, from low budget spy capers to low budget monster mashes, with the occasional addition of a colorful sidekick to sweeten the pot. But more about that later.

#### KEY FILMS:

**SANTO VS. THE VAMPIRE WOMEN**, aka *Santo contra las Mujeres Vampiro* (1962). This is the one by which all of Santo's subsequent monster mashes must be judged. It combines moody gothic horror with slam bang comic book action and a generous helping of actual wrestling footage, all to surprisingly pleasing effect. If you don't like this one, then your calendar's clear, because this particular genre might not be for you.

**SANTO AND BLUE DEMON VS. THE MONSTERS**, aka *Santo y Blue Demon contra los Monstruos* (1969). *Monstruos* has all the broken charm of a cut-rate boardwalk haunted house, and about the same level of scares. All of the costume department's resources are railed as Santo and his pal Blue Demon pair off against a geriatric wrapped in Ace bandages (*The Mummy*), a tall guy wearing a Don Post mask and a beatnik goatee ("*Franqustein*"), a hirsute derelict (*The Wolf Man*), a recycled costume from 1959's *SHIP OF MONSTERS* (*The Cyclops*), and your dentist wearing a cape and plastic fangs (*The Vampire*). Hilarity—um, I mean unrelenting horror, ensues.

#### BLUE DEMON

Cult film fans will likely be familiar with Blue Demon from the team-up films he did with El Santo during the '70s, but the truth is that Blue had previously starred in a string of solo adventures going back almost as far as the beginning of Santo's film career. Having entered this world as Alejandro Muñoz Moreno, Blue Demon was in the third decade of a successful wrestling career when, in 1964, he signed on with independent producer Luis Enrique Vergara to star in a string of low budget lucha films. These were very similar to Santo's

early screen ventures, with the difference being that Blue's debut, *El Demonio Azul*, wasted no time in pitting him against foes culled from the horror movie pantheon—in particular, a plurality of werewolves and a mad scientist who created them.

Part of Blue Demon's appeal arises from him laboring as number two in the shadow of the phenomenally popular El Santo. Never portrayed as the well-rounded crime fighting machine that the silver masked one was, he nonetheless exhibited a game and dogged determination that saw him throwing himself into the film's physical action with palpable gusto. His screen persona might have been one dimensional, but you never got the sense that he was phoning it in. It also has to be said that Blue's dramatic blue and silver costume, especially once his films made the transition to color, lent him a comic book superhero aura that few of his contemporaries could match.

At just twenty-six movies, Blue Demon's cinematic output was less prolific than Santo's, but this gave him the advantage of having a much better gem-to-stinker ratio—such that, come the '70s, he became a value-enhancing ingredient in other series. This included his role as the leader of THE CHAMPIONS OF JUSTICE (aka *Los Campeones Justiceros*), a sort of luchadore-Justice League that also included Mil Mascaras. And then, of course, there are his turns as a sidekick to Santo in films that, thanks in no small part to his presence, were among the best of Santo's late career offerings.

#### KEY FILMS:

**BLUE DEMON VS. THE INFERNAL BRAINS**, aka *Blue Demon contra Cerebros Infernales* (1966). When Blue's movies made the move from black and white to color, director Chano Urueta (he of the cult classic THE BRANIAC) took full advantage, making *Cerebros Infernales* a bright, primary-hued live action comic book with a heavy debt to the Batman TV series. Talking disembodied brains, a jazzy score, lots of go-go dancing, and lucha movie MVP Noe Murayama camping it up as the cackling mad scientist villain are just a few of this movie's attractions. Not just one of Blue Demon's best, but also one of the best that the lucha genre has to offer.

**SANTO AND BLUE DEMON VS. DRACULA AND THE WOLFMAN**, aka *Santo y Blue Demon contra Dracula y el Hombre Lobo* (1972). One of the great monster mash-ups of lucha cinema, this one sees Dracula and the Wolfman teaming up to create an army of vampires and werewolves so that they might... *whaaaat*, people? That's right, rule the world! Blue and Santo fight as a unit in this one, with none of the "evil Blue Demon" gimmickry of other team-ups, and they share some cozy "at home" moments that include them playing bridge in their masks and comfy sweater vests. Add to that that this one boasts a gothic set look that shows equally the influence of the Hammer horrors and the work of Mario Bava and you have a film that's sure to send chills up any self-respecting monster kid's spine.

#### MIL MASCARAS

Mil Mascaras differs from Santo and Blue Demon in two distinct ways. One is his relative youth, since the man who greeted life as Aaron Rodriguez entered this world a full twenty-five years after Santo and twenty after Blue. The other



# DEMON



# MASCARAS



PEDRO ARMENDARIZ

ATTENDING SPECIAL  
JOHN CARRADINE  
RUS BERRY  
BARONETTO RODRIGUEZ  
JESICA PONCE  
VIVIANE LANE  
RUFEL GARY



is the fact that, unlike Santo and Blue, who both started their film careers after they had established themselves as superstars in the ring, Mil came to the screen as an unknown, and thus established his image and resulting stardom as much through his work on film as on the mat.

This came to pass when the aforementioned producer Luis Enrique Vergara, thanks to Blue suffering an injury and Santo seeking greener pastures, found himself without a luchadore to star in his films. Mil, a relative newcomer to lucha libre, answered the resulting call. Ironically, the high profile of his subsequent wrestling career makes him the one luchadore out of the Top Three who is more remembered by U.S. residents for his ring exploits than his films—his frequent visits to the States being numerous enough to garner him a headlining match at Madison Square Garden.

Suffice it to say that Vergara gambled well. While just as good (or bad) of an actor as Santo or Blue Demon, Mil Mascaras' appeal arises as much from his visual aspect as from his natural screen presence. First of all, he bore the trim physique of a modern body builder, making him cut that much more of a superheroic figure as compared to his more stocky fellow fighters. Beyond that, however, was his flamboyant style of dress, which incorporated everything from gold lamé to leopard print to flouncy pirate blouses, and made Mil Mascaras (meaning "Thousand Masks") the perfect luchadore for the age of Bowie.

#### KEY FILMS:

**THE VAMPIRE GIRLS**, aka *Las Vampiras* (1968). This is the first of two films made back to back that paired Mil with aging horror icon John Carradine. Carradine plays a mad vampire king at war with a gang of shapely, interpretive-dancing lady vampires. If I need to tell you more about this movie to make you want to watch it, you clearly need some kind of a shot. Carradine's other pairing with Mil, **ENGIMA OF DEATH** (*Enigma de Muerte*), in which he plays a Nazi officer hiding out in a carnival disguised as a clown, is also well worth seeing.

#### LAS LUCHADORAS

Las Luchadoras are distinct within lucha cinema for being not actual luchadores-turned-actors, but a pair of actors playing luchadores—in this case, the lovely Lorena Velazquez and the American and also lovely Elizabeth Campbell. Fortunately, they compensate for any lack of authenticity with a filmography that is delightfully monster intense, so everybody wins.

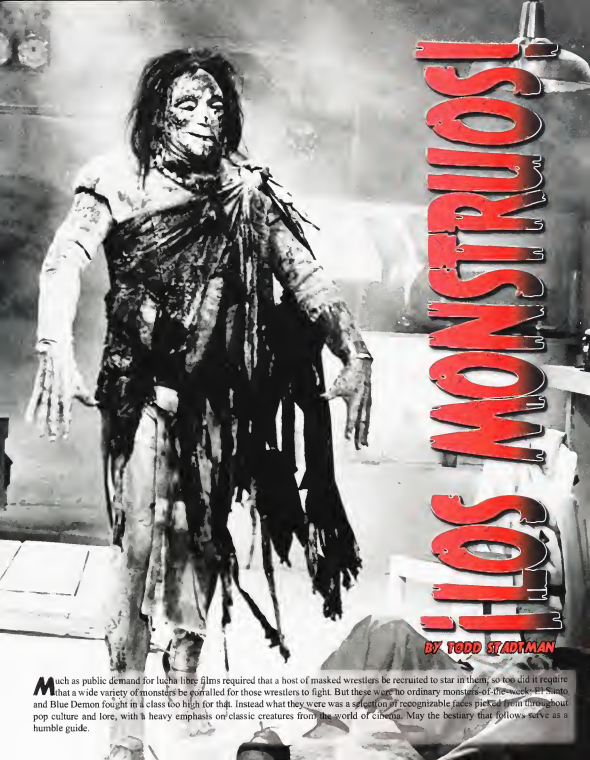
The Luchadoras' first two features were brought to American television as **DOCTOR OF DOOM** (1963) and **WRESTLING WOMEN VS. THE AZTEC MUMMY** (1964), and as a result became as much cult classics as Santo's haphazardly-dubbed

**TOP:** One sheet from Mil Mascaras' most famous lucha adventure—*Las Vampiras*. **LEFT:** While women in the US were preparing to burn their bras, in Mexican cinema the ladies declared their equal rights with their fists and feet by putting all types of beatings on cinematic monsters.

# LUCHADORAS







# LOS MONSTRUOS!

BY TODD STADTMAN

**M**uch as public demand for lucha libre films required that a host of masked wrestlers be recruited to star in them, so too did it require that a wide variety of monsters be corralled for those wrestlers to fight. But these were no ordinary monsters-of-the-week: El Santo and Blue Demon fought in a class too high for that. Instead what they were was a selection of recognizable faces plucked from throughout pop culture and lore, with a heavy emphasis on classic creatures from the world of cinema. May the bestiary that follows serve as a humble guide.



## THE MUMMY

One needn't delve too far into lucha cinema to see that there is long standing beef between masked wrestlers and mummies. This arguably goes back as far as the second film in the original Aztec Mummy trilogy, 1957's *CURSE OF THE AZTEC MUMMY* (*La Maldición de la Momia Azteca*), which featured a Santo clone called The Angel. The Wrestling Women then got seriously down to the business of mummy bashing in 1964's *WRESTLING WOMEN VS. THE AZTEC MUMMY* (*Las Luchadoras contra la Momia*), although, confusingly, their foe was a mummy who could turn into a bat.

But it was not until 1970 that mummy-mania would truly overtake the world of lucha libre, with the success of *THE MUMMIES OF GUANAJUATO*, the first film to star Santo, Blue Demon, and Mil Máscaras together. A steady procession of sequels and knock-offs would follow, with the result that few years passed during the 70s in which mummies did not face off against luchadores on the big screen. What may be confusing for newcomers is that the Mummies of Guanajuato (a real thing, by the way), being products of natural mummification, are a lot less like the shambling bandage jockeys we're used to and a lot more like what we would normally call zombies. Hey, I just see them as they call them.

## THE VAMPIRE

The vampire, being typically represented as an effete European in evening wear, would seem like a strange choice of foe for a burly professional wrestler. This is why, in lucha movies, he or she is typically attended by a staff of equally burly minions. In *SANTO AND BLUE DEMON VS. DRACULA AND THE WOLFMAN*, Dracula is aided by, not only an army of werewolves, but also a gang of bumbling mobsters straight out of *GUYS AND DOLLS*. In *SANTO VS. THE VAMPIRE WOMEN AND LAS VAMPIRAS*, the vampires have on their side their sheer sexiness which, if you paid attention to all those Pat Benatar records back in the day, was enough to take down any man regardless of weight class. It also may be that Dracula's innate fineness served the populist tone of the lucha films, wherein the luchadores were working class yobs keeping the aristocratic fop in check with a little fist music.



It should also be noted that, while these vampire films draw generously from the Universal classics, they owe an equal debt to European horrors like the Hammer *Dracula* pictures. The touchstone *SANTO AND BLUE DEMON VS. DRACULA AND THE WOLFMAN*, in addition to those aforementioned, also shows the influence of Paul Naschy's Spanish horror films—in particular in the character of Rufus the werewolf, played by Augustin Martínez Solares. Meanwhile, *SANTO VS. THE VAMPIRE WOMEN*, in both its staging and cinematography, seems to take some obvious cues from Italian Mario Bava's then-recent *BLACK SUNDAY*. For this and other reasons, it is within this particular branch of wrestler-themed horror that some of the most enjoyable pictures from the genre as a whole can be found.

## SPACE INVADERS

The space invader seems to have been a reliable fallback for lucha filmmakers, allowing them to introduce otherworldly content without necessarily needing

much in the way of props or special make-up. Probably the quintessential luchadore-fights-alien-invasers movie is 1966's *SANTO VS. THE MARTIAN INVASION* (*Santo contra la Invasión de los Marcianos*)—and I'm not just saying that for the scene in which a chorus line of sexy Martian ladies performs a burlesque number for a stunned nightclub crowd. Elsewhere, the seemingly ongoing war between the sexes in lucha cinema saw to it that Blue Demon squared off against an all female invasion force in *Blue Demon contra las Invasoras*, and Santo, in his final two films, was tasked with taming buxom extraterrestrial twins. The war of the worlds theme even made it into the obscurest corners of the genre with 1974's *Los Jaguares contra el Invasor Misterioso*, one of a pair of Colombian-shot adventures featuring The Jaguars—a trio of fuzzy, Jaguar print wearing luchadores.

## FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER

Surely the most memorable depiction of Frankenstein's creation in lucha cinema



is that found in **SANTO AND BLUE DEMON VS. THE MONSTERS**, wherein he seriously looks like someone fitted Manuel Leal with an old Don Post mask and drew a goatee on it. This Monster is also seen at the wheel whenever the monsters go out in their monster mobile cruising for trouble—something I haven't seen him do outside of **THE MONSTERS**. Does he actually have a license?

This aside, the Monster, at least in spirit, also plays a part in one of Santo and Blue Demon's better team-ups, **SANTO AND BLUE DEMON VS. DR. FRANKENSTEIN**, wherein, rather than a knock off of the Karloff original, he is actually a hulking black man called Golem. The monster in **SANTO VS. FRANKENSTEIN'S DAUGHTER** (1971) is more of a return to the familiar, but takes a backseat to his creator's plans to create a youth serum—with Santo's blood being a key ingredient.

#### THE APE MAN

Don't let it be said that Dr. Moreau didn't have any Mexican corollary in creating frightening human-beast hybrids—which is to say he did. This is due largely to the impact of the 1956 proto-lucha film *Ladron de Cadaveres* ("Body Snatcher"), an atmospheric tale of a mad scientist who implants an ape's brain in a wrestler's body and creates a rampaging beast man. The plot of *Ladron* was deemed solid enough to serve as the basis for the first Las

Luchadoras film *Las Luchadoras contra el Medico Asesino* (released to U.S. TV as the Wrestling Women film **DOCTOR OF DOOM**) and also the later *Las Luchadoras contra el Robot Asesino*. By this point it's unclear whether filmmakers were remaking *Ladron de Cadaveres* or if its story had simply become the generic plot for all things Wrestling Women related. In

any case, it also ended up as the basis for *La Horripilante Bestia Humana* which, with a little inserted gore and nudity, later became the notorious **NIGHT OF THE BLOODY APES**. Santo and Blue Demon even hopped aboard the band wagon with **SANTO AND BLUE DEMON VS. DR. FRANKENSTEIN**, which owes a far greater debt to *Ladron de Cadaveres* than it does Mary Shelley.

#### WEREWOLVES

Blue Demon had the pleasure of throwing down against werewolves in his first feature, *Demonio Azul*, in 1964. In that case, the story also had an element of **DOCTOR JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE** to it, as the werewolves were the results of botched experiments on the part of a mad scientist trying to create a superhero. Werewolves also played a part in *Santo contra Las Lobas* (**SANTO VS. THE SHE-WOLVES**), one of the best Santo movies of the 70s. That film stands out for taking a grittier, distinctly early 70s approach to its horror—definitely more **THE HILLS HAVE EYES** than **HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN**. Writer and director Jaime Jimenez Pons took the further risk of showing us a Santo who was credibly imperiled and sweating bullets as a result. All of which goes toward proving that,



despite its weak showing in **SANTO AND BLUE DEMON VS. THE MONSTERS**, the lycanthrope was still capable of presenting a noteworthy threat.

#### PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

Lucha cinema left no stone unturned when it came to finding horror film fixtures for its heroes to fight. Broadly speaking, **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA** turned out to be the basis for two consecutive Santo films, *Santo contra el Estrangulador* (**SANTO VS. THE STRANGLER**) and *Espectro del Estrangulador* (**GHOST OF THE STRANGLER**), both made in 1963 and both featuring a mad, disfigured musician who haunts the rafters of the music hall where he once performed. Hewing even more closely to Gaston Leroux's original, perhaps, is *Blue Demon's La Sombra del Murciélago* (**THE SHADOW OF THE BAT**), even though the phantom is this time a disfigured wrestler who abducts a beautiful singer played by Marta Romano. Seeing as the Bat is played by regular lucha movie heavy Fernando Osés, a real wrestler himself, we're at least in for a fairly matched fight.

#### ZOMBIES

As mentioned above, this section could easily include all of the movies spun off or inspired by **THE MUMMIES OF GUANAJUATO**, but those people who made them had a good reason for naming them such and I'm not going to get into an imagined etymological quarrel with them. That said, the first lucha film to feature zombies in name was Santo's first starring vehicle *Santo contra los Zombies* (released to U.S. TV as **INVASION OF THE ZOMBIES**). Granted, the zombies therein were more like remote-controlled human automatons, but they did enough



shuffling and glazed staring to satisfy most undemanding horror fans.

More in line with our expectations would be 1973's *La Invasion de los Muertos* (**THE INVASION OF THE DEAD**), an odd film for

which Blue Demon was called in to sub for its original star—athlete and escape artist Zoveck, who was accidentally killed during filming. This movie shows clear signs of those involved being familiar with



the work of Romero and, despite being a mess, still boasts some genuinely creepy moments. Also worth mentioning is 1960's excellent **NEUTRON VS. THE DEATH ROBOTS**, one of a series of films featuring the luchadore-like superhero Neutron, played by Wolf Ruvinskis. As zombie-like as the titular threat is, however, some purists might object to the fact that they are made by the film's supervillain, Dr. Caronte, in what appear to be oversized pizza ovens.

#### THE INVISIBLE MAN

Like Dracula, the Invisible Man would seem like an odd foe for a Mexican wrestler, not the least because the fight scenes would tax the miming skills of

a Santo or Mil Mascaras. The makers of 1964's **El Asesino Invisible** (THE INVISIBLE KILLER) instead pitted him against a made-up wrestler by the name of **El Enmascarado de Oro** ("The Golden Mask"), played by actor Jorge Rivero. The invisibility effects are actually quite good for the time, and there are also some effectively unsettling scenes, such as the one in which our hero locates the Invisible Man by seeing his reflection in the eye of a cat. Nonetheless, the invisible one didn't pass muster enough to warrant a second appearance within the genre.



**ABOVE: 1968's THE BAT WOMAN envisioned an orange, aquatic creature that could only be stopped by a wealthy woman fighting crime in a tiny bat bikini.**

*Filmadora Panamericana S.A. Distribuidora*

**ANA BERTHA LEPE**  
**GUILLERMO MURRAY CARLOS AGOSTI**  
*y presentación de:*  
**el ENMASCARADO de ORO**

**EL ASESINO INVISIBLE**

CON: **ADRIANA ROEL y MIGUEL ARENAS**

Direccion: **RENE CARDONA**

Distribucion: **RENE CARDONA** Produccion: **ALBERTO LOPEZ**

HEINTZ IN MEXICO - IMPRESO EN MEXICO

#### LA LLORONA, THE CRYING WOMAN

La Llorona, the vengeful spirit of a jilted 17th-century woman, has the distinction of being the only monster from Mexican folklore to appear in a lucha film. That film was 1974's *La Venganza de la Llorona* (THE VENGEANCE OF THE CRYING WOMAN), a team up between Santo and famous Cuban-born boxing champ Jose Mantequilla Napoles. This is one of those films in which the makers randomly decided to make Santo, despite his experiences, a disbeliever, and as such constantly insisting that there must be a rational explanation for all of the paranormal goings-on. This sets the stage for a running gag in which every member of the cast has a firsthand encounter with La Llorona while Santo, too caught up in refuting the existence of ghosts altogether, keeps missing her, by seconds. This does not bode well for us seeing any wrestler vs. monster action in *La Venganza de la Llorona*, which is probably for the best, as La Llorona is really just a mummified old woman. Nor would we see Santo and Napoles share the screen again



after this. Fans of *La Llorona*, however, can see her in any number of Mexican horror films going back as far as the 30s. None of those feature wrestlers, however.

#### THE BLOB

*Asesinos de Otros Mundos* is a 1971 Santo film in which space bacteria fumed from moon rocks terrorize the countryside. These space bacteria are realized by having a bunch of people scurry around under a dirty looking tarp as their victims patiently await being engulfed by them, which could just as easily make *Asesinos de Otros Mundos* a remake of *THE CREEPING TERROR*.

#### CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON

*La Mujer Murcielago* (THE BAT WOMAN, 1968) is a film in which Italian beauty Maura Monti capers around in a Batgirl costume that consists of little more than skin, and hence needs little more to

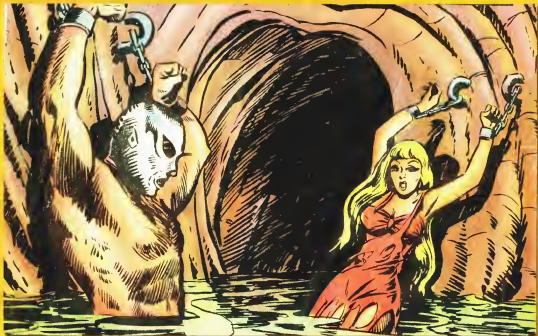
recommend it. It doesn't hurt, however, that it also features a bipedal sea monster that's created by placing a GI Joe doll in an aquarium with a large goldfish and boiling the water. The resulting beast, while a ringer for Universal's Creature in most other ways, is orange in color, which I guess frees the makers of *La Mujer Murcielago* from charges of copyright infringement, though I don't think they'd have been so lucky if anyone from DC Comics had seen it.

#### THE REMAINS

The remaining creatures of lucha cinema are a mixed bag that includes miscellaneous beast people (Las Luchadoras' *Las Panteras*, THE RETURN OF THE CHAMPIONS OF JUSTICE), witches (Santo's *Atacan las Brujas*), the Cyclops (SANTO AND BLUE DEMON VS. THE MONSTERS), and even vicious dogs (*La Bestias del Terror*, one of Santo and Blue Demon's many team-ups). And even though it came out

long before the vogue for cinematic serial killers, the villain of *Blue Demon contra Poder Satánico* (1964), with his penchant for incinerating his female victims alive, comes startlingly close to the killer in the grind house classic DON'T GO IN THE HOUSE. Unlike in that film, however, the killer in *Blue Demon's* picture is also a Satan worshipper—a reliable mainstay that would also see cultists turn up as foes in the 1969 Santo and Blue vehicle *El Mundo de los Muertos* and the early Mil Mascaras film *Las Canallas*.

So thorough were Mexican filmmakers in appropriating the cream of the movie monster crop that one has to wonder what might have been had the genre kept going strong. Santo vs. Jason? Blue Demon vs. Freddy? Perhaps. But, thankfully, there is enough of a backlog of monster wrestling goodness to prevent us from grieving over missed opportunities. **D**



# The **SILVER MASK** in **SEPIA** THE LUCHA-HERO GENRE'S UNSUNG ORIGINS IN COMICS By Keith J. Rainville

**A**ll those notions of Mexican masked wrestlers moonlighting as justice fighters, being the go-to authorities to battle supernatural menaces the police and army can't handle... they all come from comics, mainly from the mind of one man: Jose G. Cruz. Cruz was like a Stan Lee and Jack Kirby all in one—a prolific publisher, terrific painter and illustrator, imaginative writer, and general idea man behind a comic book empire that cranked out lucha-hero pulp with immense circulation.

1952 is a confusing year. Cruz was looking for a superhero, and El Santo was already a big star in the ring. Coining the phrase “*Enmascarado de Plata*”, he put the silver mask into square-format pocket digests that flew off the newsstands. A film serial of the same name hit theaters at about the same time, starring... you guessed it... *El Medico Asesino!* Wait, what? Yeah. Santo had allegedly turned down the gig, so a surgical scrubs-clad “Killer

Doctor” wrestler was thrown in as hero against a silver masked villain for, also alleged, spite.

Santo's screen career wouldn't start for another six years or so, but in those years his little comics digest sold more and more, peaking at *500,000 copies per issue*, which were coming out *three times a week*—that's six million sold per month. On top of that, Mexican newsstands let readers trade back old issues towards new ones, selling the used stuff at a discount two or three times over. That many issues, that many owners, plus copies passed around to family and friends... pretty much *everyone* in Mexico was reading *El Enmascarado de Plata*.

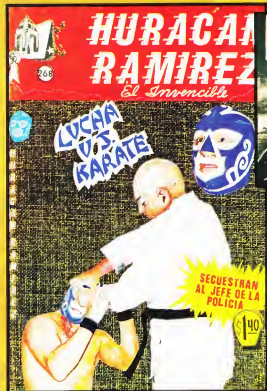
The single-color adventures were created via an art collage process called *Fotomontaje*, an effort to create a sense of realism unique among other line-art competitors on the shelf. Santo was brought into a photography studio and posed in dozens of action



shots; running, punching, kicking, lifting, etc. These were laid on top of cityscape photos shot slightly out of focus to suggest depth, with brush and pen work added for explosions, motion lines, and in the more adventurous stories, giant monsters and weird creatures from beyond imagination. Pasted-up pages were plated for press then picked apart so elements could be reused for later stories, collage crews working around the clock in factory-like fashion to assemble tri-weekly issues.

The Santo comics were published for 30 continuous years, but not without a major hiccup. In 1972, the champion and Cruz parted ways, and legal wrangling ensued. Cruz couldn't compete with the wrestler (and various promoters) over ownership of the mask, but he did end up with the comic rights, and proceeded to continue the book with a burly weight lifter taking over the role of hero in a modified mask and outfit. Many of these "fake Santo" issues were reprints of old adventures with the new guy pasted in, but to make up for it a bit, Cruz painted insane new covers, cribbing famous paintings and movie posters—even promising character crossovers that could never have happened, like the entire line-up of Hammer horror monsters, or Princess Leia from STAR WARS.

Despite its prolific reach, none of Cruz's material has ever seen a reprinting effort the way historically important books do here. There are legal issues, and the page art was continually recycled, so there are no original elements to go back to, and there's little knowledge of the work outside of Mexico to encourage international sales. Thus, we know the lucha-hero idiom through the films, and sadly, the comics are becoming a forgotten treasure.



**OPPOSITE PAGE:** Cruz covers were either fully painted, posed photographs, or illustrated. **LEFT:** Huracan Ramirez's photo adventures were more set in the sports world, with the masked man more apt to save Mexico's World Cup team as imprudent goalie than battle monsters or aliens. **TOP:** Santa wasn't the only fotomontaje hero. Blue Demon's adventures pitted him more against costumed criminals—a la the Batman TV show—with the likes of hooded assassins, tiger girls, and masked thieves akin to Fantomas falling prey to the massive hands of 'Demonio Azul'. **ABOVE:** While on a jungle adventure, Santa battles a massive panther that rather resembles the ceramic variety everyone's grandma had on the mantle.



by August Ragone & Edward Holland

It's no surprise that the theatrical antics of the masked *Technicos* from the Latin America *lucha libre* pantheon fought a mad myriad of monsters in big screen epics, but what happens when you mix Japanese Henshin Heroes and *lucha libre* with a dash of anime? You get one of the most amazingly insane hybrid productions of the 1970s: PRO-WRESTLING STAR: AZTEKAIZER (*Puroresu no Hoshi Asutekaiza!*)! But to get into the ring, it took the high-flying Dynamic Planning manga tag-team of Go Nagai (DEVILMAN) and Ken Ishikawa (GETTER ROBO) working jointly with Ultraman creators Tsuburaya Productions and publisher Mammensha Ltd. to bring together the worlds of Pro Wrestling, *tokusatsu* (Japanese-style visual effects), and anime for 26 mind-boggling half-hours on the NET television network (now TV Asahi) from October 7, 1976 to March 31, 1977.

At the time, Tsuburaya Productions had already retired their silver and red superheroes with ULTRAMAN LEO in 1975, and were off pursuing other projects, including the anime and *tokusatsu* hybrid BORNFREE: DINOSAUR CATCHERS

(*Kyoryu Tankentai Bonfuri*, 1976). On the other hand, AZTEKAIZER goes back to the basics of Japanese superhero myths with a masked vigilante protecting the innocent, featuring a decidedly non-Ultraman character, which pits a legendary hero against an ancient evil over possession of the "Star of Azteca"—a mystical jewel granting its bearer untold powers. Out to seize this ultimate prize is the Black Mist Organization, an occult society ruled by their mysterious overlord, Ruah, who creates thirteen Cyborg Warriors to seize the Star of Azteca, which was hidden somewhere in Japan.

Black Mist's evil wrestlers are a bizarre mixture of hooded heels and comicbook villains: Youngblood Hell! The Bloody Hornet! The Devil Spider! The Iron Buster! Buzzsaw Ortega! The Blue Bison! The Arabian Wolf! The Vulcan Knight! The Black Cobra! The Dark Gladiator! Red Fire! Coarse Degura! Crime Balian! Colossal Hill! Hunter Djoser! Garrison Snake! And not one, but two fake Aztekaizers!

In order to ferret out the possessor of the Star of Azteca, Ruah's lieutenant Satan Demon (Shohei Yamamoto) orders

his Satan Soldier minions to overtake Japan through dirty wrestling tactics, and murders New Japan Wrestling Champion Daijro Takaba during a title card match right in the ring with the Youngblood Hell (George Takano)! In retaliation, Daijro's younger brother Shun (Miki Shimamura) swears to avenge him. Meanwhile, the eminent archaeologist Dr. Hayamizu (Asao Matsumoto), who happens to be a friend of the family, has been secretly protecting the Star of Azteca. And to take on Black Mist, Dr. Hayamizu has developed a special "Fighting Suit" for Daijro. Now that Daijro is dead, Shun dons the good hood to fight for his right as Aztekaizer! Our super-powered grappling hero proudly rides into the fray with one of the most outrageous motor-trikes ever to hit the road, Machbeat, and trains for his battles against Black Mist with his 6-½ foot tall robot sparring partner Goriking.

Looking for new ways to attract viewers to their shows, Tsuburaya Productions began creating series which combined their renowned miniature work and photography with animated characters. For AZTEKAIZER, they proposed the show would be presented in "Dramamation"—



**No, that's not Fred Schneider in a B-52's video! The Black Mist wrestling organization was looking to take over the world, with the foot soldiers being led by the second-in-command Satan Demon (Shohel Yamamoto) and his sweet bat hat.**

the series would be shot as a live action series, but also feature an extended animated sequence in each episode, in which the hero goes into his power-up mode ("Kaizer In") to deliver the coup de grace to the villain of the week. While there was no shortage of live-action bouts on this admittedly low-budget show, the animated sequences in these climatic confrontations made for an interesting tag-team, mixing 2D anime with 3D tokusatsu action (no special glasses were required). Needless to say, "Dramamation" added a very surreal edge to the show and, combined with Tsuburaya's famous optical effects, created a definite otherworldly plus to AZTEKAIZER.

But AZTEKAIZER also crosses over from the surreal to the real with the inclusion of actual pro wrestling personalities of the day, including freelance wrestler Yoshiaki Fujiwara, who is still in the game at 63; George Takano, who also wrestled under the hood as "The Cobra" and "Mr. X"; Satoru Sayama, who is perhaps best known as the original "Tiger Mask"; Kuniaki Kobayashi, who was known as both "Kid Koby" and "Tiger Hunter" (a rival of Tiger Mask); Daigoro

Oshiro, also known as "Tsutomu Oshiro", and Makoto "Don" Arikawa, who debuted as "Little Hamada" and was later nicknamed the "Undercard Rikidozan" as comedy relief. Real-life referees included Masaru "Kotetsu" Yamamoto and Teruo "Misier" Takahashi (who also went by the name "Peter Takahashi"), and the ring announcer was Tetsuo Baisho (Collision in Korea).

Compared to other shows both old and new, AZTEKAIZER is about as far-out and far away from Nebula M78 as you can get, but features great theme songs and searing background tunes penned by action music maestro Toshiaki Tsushima (THE STREET FIGHTER). The exciting opening and closing theme songs, sung by Guinness World Record best-seller Masato Shimon ("Oyoge! Taiyaki-kun") are one of the best things the series has going for it.

Even though Go Nagai and Ken Ishikawa went on to create another live-action superhero series, the mind-boggling BATTLE HAWK, AZTEKAIZER was the sole co-effort between Dynamic Planning and Tsuburaya Productions. Even so, Aztekaizer was not Nagai and Ishikawa's only Pro-Wrestling Superhero—there was

also the infamous Jushin Liger, who would eventually become known worldwide in manga, animation, and in the ring! But that's another story...

Perhaps appropriately, while AZTEKAIZER never made it to English-speaking audiences, the series was broadcast in Mexico under the title REY AZTEKA (as recently as 1995). Dubbed into Spanish, all of the characters suddenly took on more on an air of a lucha libre monster movie, with derivatives names and plotlines. The mid-90s rebroadcast was a direct response to the popularity of the POWER RANGERS and Mexico's own famous hooded luchadores, such as Mil Mascaras, Blue Demon Jr., Rey Mysterio, *y mucho mas*.

So, if you're a fan of lucha libre and tokusatsu, PRO-WRESTLING STAR: AZTEKAIZER is your ringside seat. *Come on! Come on! Come on!* 🐼

*Read more about Japanese Superheroes in the pages of MONSTER ATTACK TEAM, now available from the publishers of FM!*



# ÚLTIMO DRAGÓN:

## THE LAST ACTION HERO

by Dan Madigan

Professional wrestling grabs you at an early age. In our young and impressionable minds, the larger-than-life personas that roam the ring both captivate and mesmerize us. They are real life good guys and bad guys, or in wrestling jargon: baby faces and heels. And even though he has kept his baby face hidden under a mask for twenty-five years, one of the top performers in the business today is none other than Último Dragón. Any true wrestling fan knows how important Último is to the business and how his storied career has created an unparalleled legacy.

Born Yoshihiro Asai in Japan, adopting the ring name Último Dragón, and adorning his now famous mask, Último became a legend in that country's wrestling Strong Style. Then, in an unprecedented move, Último traveled to Mexico to become a *lucha libre* icon. He has performed literally around the world and entertained thousands and thousands of fans. It was this amazing personality that got me excited to work with Último Dragón when he and I were both working for the WWE a few years back.

Unfortunately, before I had the chance to create some interesting storylines around Último's character, his contract expired, and the WWE made a major misstep in letting him go. When fate had Último and I cross paths again a few years later, I would not make the same missteps the WWE made.

This time, instead of creating storylines and scenarios for Último Dragón in the wrestling ring, I have the pleasure of creating adventures for him in the world of graphic novels. Or to be more specific, I get to create adventures around the one thing

that has made a culturally significant impact on his career—his fabled mask. To every masked wrestler, the colorful covering he wears to hide his identity and to unleash his hidden self is one of the most important things he has. It is the true visual essence of who they are.

Realizing that Mexican wrestling borders on the surreal, it was easy to envision stories that reflect that the bizarre and strange world that Último and other *enmascarados* (masked wrestlers) inhabit. But I wanted to take the stories further, deeper than any other wrestling stories that I had I worked on before. I decided on creating a wrestling story with no wrestling in it. In all honesty, I cannot write as well as Último Dragón wrestles, so why bother? I wanted to take the story of his mask to a new direction, one that had not been even thought about before, and having Último's full confidence and support, I did just that.

I wanted the stories to reflect Último's career and journey. So I have the opening story start out in 12<sup>th</sup> century Japan (Último's country of birth). This is where the first hero in our epic learns about the fabled Dragón mask and its powers. After his village is burned to the ground, his love is stolen by demonic mercenaries, and his best friend betrays him, our headstrong hero goes on a revenge filled quest only to find out the futility that his rage has caused all around him. This is a story that I loaded with all my early Asian influences as a kid, namely samurai films, ninja movies, *kaiju* stories, *yōkai* folklore, and Japanese horror legend. The story is never fully resolved, and our hero finds himself looking for both



**The variety of artwork reflects the different characters, time periods, and locales that make up the world of ÚLTIMO DRAGÓN.**

his love and vengeance across time and history.

The second story takes place in Mexico right around the time of the Revolution (Último's second home away from home). The mask makes its reappearance in this tale after being dug up from the grave of a long dead *enmascarado* gunfighter. Our new hero wears the dead man's mask to gather its powers in order to track down a long lost love who is being chased by dark forces deep into Mexico. Once again, my adolescent influences come out in this second story. Visually, it is a cross between Mexico's Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) and Japan's Kabuki Theater; narratively, it is a hybrid of spaghetti westerns, gothic horror stories, revenge tales, and pulp novels. Filled with characters that are both morally monstrous and spiritually grotesque, this story is as much Mario Bava and Tod Browning as it is Sergio Corbucci and Sam Peckinpah.

The third tale is the first one written in the first person, and takes place in New Orleans after WWII in an abandoned asylum. Once again, the protagonist of this story dons the well-traveled mask as he battles demons to reclaim the soul of a possessed girl (imagine a mask-wearing Sam Spade as an Exorcist). This tale is a cross between ANGEL HEART and Lucio Fulci's THE BEYOND, a noirish journey into a horrific nightmare.

The fourth installment has a different approach, as our hero is now a heroine, and becomes Última Dragón—a female superspy

in the mold of Modesty Blaise and Emnia Peel with a hint of DANGER: DIABOLIK and BARBARELLA thrown in for good measure, all presented in psychedelic London of the Swinging Sixties.

And finally, the last story is a post-apocalyptic tale that has the Último Dragón mask itself evolving into a high tech piece of futuristic equipment. The mask is worn by a condemned prisoner as he makes a desperate motorcycle ride across the wasteland in order to find a cure for a virus that has wiped out most of mankind. Our hero is part Snake Plissken, part Mad Max, and part Ethan Edwards in an all out high-octane, white-knuckle ride into oblivion.

These series of graphic novels could not come out the way I envisioned if it wasn't for the amazing artwork of Wil Woods and Tryine Carver, two incredibly talented artists that have brought my words to life. We have taken our project on the Kickstarter route and we hope that wrestling/lucha libre/comic book/ Último Dragón fans will support and donate to our cause. We wanted to go to the fans because we *are* the fans. Everyone involved in this project is committed 100% to its completion, and we will let nothing step in our way of having this come to fruition. And it is extremely fortunate that the first time I saw *enmascarados* and Mexican horror movies was in *Famous Monsters* magazine, forty years ago! I guess everything does come around in the end. ☺

*Special thanks to Dr. Ranjan Chhibber, Professor at Florida State College, for his indispensable help on this project.*









# THE EYE OF THE TIGER MASK!

## THE TRUE STORY OF JAPAN'S GREATEST MASKED WRESTLER

BY AUGUST RAGONE

While masked Luchadors never seemed to click in North America as hugely as they did South of the Border, Mexico didn't corner the market on these hooded weirdos. Professional wrestling caught on like wildfire in Japan during the 1960s, largely thanks to the legendary Japanese proponent of the sport, Rikidozan, and the advent of television. A number of American and Mexican names became top-billed draws in Japan, from "Classy" Freddie Blasse to Mil Mascaras—who thrilled Japanese audiences, heel and face alike, and pro wrestling erupted into a nationwide craze.

During the mid to late '60s, the prominence of professional wrestling collided with the explosion of the "Sports Boom," raining shrapnel into all manners of popular entertainment and causing a surge in manga stories about professional racing, baseball, judo, karate, boxing, and volleyball—many of which contained fantastic elements, like *THE BLACK SECRET WEAPON*, written and illustrated by Daiji Kazumine (*GOLDEN BAT*), featuring the exploits of a professional baseball pitcher who is descendant of a ninja clan using an ancient *shuriken*-throwing technique on the mound to shut out rival teams.

But among the flurry of titles and genres stood the most prominent sports manga writer of the era: Ikki Kajiwaru (1936-1987). Born Asaki Takamori, the prolific scribe was known to write under the pseudonym Asao Takamori when he was writing for two rival manga publications. He was responsible for perhaps the greatest sports manga of the era, including *STAR OF THE GIANTS* (1966-1971), illustrated

by Noboru Kawasaki (*SONG OF THE LADYBUG*), and *THE SAMURAI GIANTS*, illustrated by Ko Inoue—both highly fictionalized stories concerning pitchers for the Yomiuri Giants baseball team. A number of anime series and movies were spawned from Kajiwaru's works, including several films based on the life of *Kyoshinken Karate* founder Madatatsu Oyama starring Sonny Chiba.

Naturally, Kajiwaru also turned his attention to the world of pro wrestling—and later became directly involved with the New Japan Pro Wrestling promotion. His first fictional account of the world of the squared circle centered on a character loosely based on Giant Baba. Despite the fictional trappings, *GIANT TYPHOON* (1968-1971) featured real-life wrestlers Killer Kowalski, Antonio Rocca, Fritz Von Erich, "Nature Boy" Buddy Rogers, Bobo Brazil, The Destroyer, and many others. Illustrated by Naoki Tsuji (*HAYATO, ZERO FIGHTER*), *GIANT TYPHOON* wasn't the only manga created by the duo that year—nor was it Kajiwaru's only wrestling manga. Another, *TIGER MASK*, would prove to exceed all expectations.

The story goes that during an outing to a zoo, a young war orphan, Naoto Date, exclaims that he wants to become a tiger, after staring one of the caged beasts down. He soon runs away after beating up a group of older children who tried to taunt him, and is scouted by the "Tiger's Den," a notorious group of heels, managed by the mysterious Mr. X. Undergoing their notorious "Murderer's Training" which spells death for some, Naoto becomes "Tiger Mask"—unflatteringly nicknamed

the "Yellow Devil" by Americans, where he exercises an unflinching and frightening savagery on his opponents. Because of his abhorrent disregard for the rules, he is naturally disqualified each time, but revels in the notoriety: "It is the pride of Tiger Mask to be disqualified for destroying my opponents!"

After terrorizing the US, Naoto returns to Japan, and his no-holds-barred brutality in the ring shocks everyone, including Giant Baba and Antonio Inoki. But he soon finds himself helping his former orphanage, in debt to a yakuza group, and under the guise of an inheritance, recklessly donates all of his earnings to them. This displeases the Tiger's Den, to which 50% of his take must go. Mr. X warns him that if he doesn't pay up, the Tiger's Den will brand him a traitor. All traitors are beaten to a pulp in the ring, and if they don't incur fatal injuries, they later turn up dead—either by their own devices or someone else's. Once betrayed, the Tiger's Den lets no one escape.

With this over his head, Naoto decides to continue to be a heel and pay off his debt to the Tiger's Den, but the yakuza squeeze for more money, and an orphan who idolizes his heel tactics causes him to come to an epiphany: he can't hear to let an orphan follow in his footsteps. Ultimately, he vows to leave the Tiger's Den and set out as a face, abide by the rules of fair play, and champion the orphans. Meanwhile, the Rulers of the Tiger's Den vow revenge and begin sending all of their killer wrestlers to challenge him inside the ring and all their assassins to finish him off outside the ring. Naoto trains rigorously to develop special moves to counter their use of foul play.

such as the "Ultra Tiger Drop" and the "Fujiyama Tiger Breaker".

However, continuously put through the physical torture by such notorious wrestlers as Mr. No, The Red Death, Black Python, Star Skull, King Satan, The Egyptian Mummy, Golden Mask, and Dracula, as well as the three rulers of the Tiger's Den: Big Tiger, King Tiger, and Tiger the Great—Naoto struggles with his conscience caused by his own strict dictum of playing by the book. El Sicodélico, Mil Mascaras' brother, advises him to abandon his fanatical obsession to his inflexible philosophy, and suggests ignoring the *five-count rule*, thus releasing Naoto from his own mental torment. With the Tiger's Den's power over him dispelled, he begins training in earnest with the legendary Lou Thesz and Dory Funk Jr. to beat their hizzare hooded heels. There's a lot more to the saga—a whole lot more, including a non-conformist ending—but that would spoil everything for those of you unfamiliar with the story.

The original manga was first serialized in the January 1968 Kodansha monthly, *Bokura* ("Our"), which went weekly in January 1969 to keep up with the new format of weekly manga. Even though TIGER MASK and Go Nagai's DANTE, LORD OF DEMONS carried *Bokura* on their shoulders, the struggling publication couldn't keep up, and the last issue hit the stands in mid-1969. Fortunately, TIGER MASK was carried over to Kodansha's newer, more highly circulated *Weekly Shonen Magazine*, where it ran through the end of 1971. When all was said and done, TIGER MASK racked up over 3,000 pages and was republished in 14 softcover editions, which immediately went into numerous editions and reprints over the years, as well as several languages.

Even though TIGER MASK is considered the third great pillar of Kajiwara's manga output (along with TOMORROW'S JOE and STAR OF THE GIANTS), it was initially not taken seriously, and considered a major step down in quality from the others because of the outrageous subject matter, an assessment which seems to have largely evaporated over the following

years. Thankfully, the adventures of the *felidae* cowed champion of justice was not confined to the manga page for long. Within its first year of publication, Toei Animation signed a deal for a full-color animated television series.

While the series, also titled TIGER MASK, began broadcasting during the first year of the manga's narrative, it soon caught up and began to surpass it—thus requiring original stories not seen in the manga, although both would eventually dovetail for the conclusion. The series featured character designs by Keiichi Kimura (ONE PIECE), which used a hard-line, sharp, angular design—almost caricatured, which was divergent from the Tsuji's manga art, and gave the animated series its own dramatic aesthetic. The talented bullpen of animators included Tomoharu Katsumata (FAREWELL, SPACE BATTLESHIP YAMATO) and Kazuo Komatsubara (ARCADIA OF MY YOUTH), underlined by the memorable



**TOP:** A cover from the very popular Tiger Mask manga series. **RIGHT:** Tiger Mask shares a little real estate with Mil Mascaras on the cover of a Japanese wrestling magazine.

# ぼくらマガジン



theme songs and score composed by Shunsuke Kikuchi (GENOCIDE).

All this ensured that the animated series became a phenomenal hit, achieving a record-breaking 31.9% audience share. It ran non-stop from October 2, 1969 through September 30, 1971 for a staggering 105 half-hour episodes (as well as three short theatrical featurettes). As mentioned earlier, when the animated series surpassed the manga's narrative, the writers were free to create new stories—some of which ended up in the manga. There were some limitations with regard to the real-life wrestlers that had appeared in the manga. Some were eliminated from the animated version; others had to have their names and appearances slightly changed, while others appeared as they had in the original manga—especially those under the auspices of Inoki's New Japan Pro Wrestling promotion.

Still, unlike US cartoons, the animated series did not shy away from the mature storyline, savage brutality, and buckets of blood that made the manga unique and controversial. In fact, the climatic confrontation between Tiger Mask and Tiger the Great is as violent—if not more so—than the black and white manga. But besides the blood and guts and the more lurid elements of the animated series, what most people remember is the impressive

**A collection of images from the Tiger Mask manga series, which saw him battle any number of dangerous foes both inside of the ring and out.**



narrative that did not necessitate a wrestling match in every episode, as well as its fully-realized character development. The one major change from the original manga was the conclusion to the story, and I won't spoil it here, but Kajiwara exclaimed, "This is really the ending I should've written!"

Needless to say, the exploits of Tiger Mask did not end there. He leapt from the second dimension into real life. New Japan Pro Wrestling introduced the real life Tiger Mask on April 23, 1981 in a match against the Dynamite Kid. The "real" Tiger Mask became an overnight sensation for his quick, acrobatic, *lucha libre* style, and he was quickly established as one of the greatest Japanese professional wrestlers of all time. While Satoru Sotoyama was the first wrestler to take on the mantle of Tiger Mask, over the last thirty years, several different wrestlers have donned the *felidae* hood, with the fifth generation stepping into the ring in 2010.

With this huge popularity, Tiger Mask was destined to return to the printed page and television screens across Japan. An all-new animated series, TIGER MASK II, began airing on April 20, 1981 and ran through January 18, 1982 for 33 episodes. The narrative springboards off of the original manga, as opposed to the original animated series, when another of the former orphanage kids, Tatsuo Aku (not seen in previous incarnations) grows up to don the hood of Tiger Mask—whose motto is "Justice is my strength!" Unlike the first series, the new Tiger Mask starts out as a

face against the legions of heels of the Alien Wrestling League. The series was directed by Kozo Morishita (DRAGONBALL Z) and featured all new theme songs and score by the returning Shunsuke Kikuchi.

To support the new animated series, three manga were created to tap into the viewing audience. First were media magazines aimed at children, written and illustrated by Yoshiaki Tsuchida (Ishimori Productions) in *Toribirando* ("TV Land", Tokuma Shoten), while Kei Amon provided the art and words for *Terebi Magazine* ("TV Magazine", Kodansha), appearing in the April and May issues, respectively. Then there was the "official" TIGER MASK II manga, published in the pages of *Weekly Shonen Magazine: Extra Edition*, written by Kajiwara and illustrated by Junichi Miyata (*Sagashi Ippai*), which debuted in September, and ran through January 1983. Ten years later, an updated and more mature retelling called TIGER, THE STAR ran in the pages of the evening newspaper *Tokyo Sports*, and was written by writer/martial artist/actor Hideo Maki, Kajiwara's younger brother, and illustrated by Shinobu Kaze (NEO DEVILMAN).

Two low-budget live action feature films were spawned from this new manga, supervised by Maki and shot in the US: LONE TIGER (1994) and LONE TIGER II (1995), directed by Warren A. Stevens (DRAGON FIGHT), and starring Bruce Locke, Richard Lynch, and Robert Z'Dar. There have also been dozens of home video releases featuring the best matches

of real-life Tiger Mask, including several dramatic direct-to-video productions, including a docu-drama starring Sho Aikawa (ZEBRAMAN). It was announced in 2011 that Tiger Mask would return in a major theatrical feature, THE TIGER MASK, starring pop heartthrob Eiji Wentz (KITARO). Unfortunately, this turned out to be a disappointing and threadbare affair with little to do with the character's origins.

Even through all of the diluted remakes and retellings, Naoto Date's philanthropy in the manga and animated series so deeply affected the readers and viewers that someone began donating expensive school backpacks to orphanages in December 2010, signing them, "Please use these backpacks for the children... Naoto Date." This phenomenon has continued, spawning over 100 copycat donations, including food, toys, and money. Some were given under the name of Joe Yabuki, the titular character from Kajiwara's TOMORROW'S JOE, who was also an orphan raised in poverty. This is the greatest testament that the spirit of the original Tiger Mask lives on! ●

*August Ragone knows some stuff about Japanese fantasy films, pop culture, and television, and is the author of ELII TSUBURAYA: MASTER OF MONSTERS (Chronicle Books). He also loves lucha monster movies and was a face under the hood as "The Amazing Caliki" for Incredibly Strange Wrestling. His blog is "The Good, The Bad, and Godzilla" at [www.augustragone.blogspot.com](http://www.augustragone.blogspot.com).*



# PECS OF PLASTIC: MASKED WRESTLER TOYS OF MEXICO AND JAPAN

BY KEITH J. RAINVILLE

If, like me, you feel the need to clutter up your desk with miniaturized collectible versions of what you watch or read, the lucha-hero genre offers plenty, mainly from two sources: Japan and Mexico.

## JAPAN

The Japanese execute arguably the finest collectibles on the planet, and companies like Nakajima-Popy, Medicom, Bulmark, and Marmit have been licensing mega-properties like TIGER MASK for decades. And they've done every version, too—the manga that looks like it was lifted right off the page, the anime variations, and even the squared-circle superstars who brought these illustrated characters to real life.

Be it vintage or newly produced, you're going to pay an arm and a leg for these, especially after international post, but the quality typically exceeds the price.

## MEXICO

While there are from time to time established toy companies that do produce properly licensed official releases of the colorful *enmascarados*, the bulk of south-of-the-border toys are "cottage industry" fare—basically bootlegs and knock-offs. Existing figures from other toy lines are re-sculpted and modified into wrestlers, then molded, re-molded, and re-re-re-molded *ad infinitum*. Often a single mold becomes a hundred different wrestlers based solely on the paint job, which range from excellent for merch from Mexico City to delightfully crude from outlying areas like Tijuana.

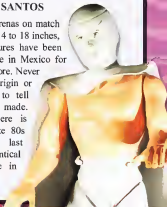
This is where merchandise and folk art cross paths. Every piece is basically a one-of-a-kind treasure, and sometimes, the worse the craftsmanship the more charming the figure. The seeker of such toys is more of an art collector than a completist—a treasure hunter who can have the same line-up of characters as another collector; yet, their shelves are nowhere near identical. It's a wild frontier, and you never know what the next find will be.

## SANTOS

Unlicensed Santo figures are the very DNA of Mexican bootleg collectibles. All the "cottage industry" suppliers start with Santo molds and base other figures off of that body, or even head.

## LARGE SCALE SANTOS

Sold outside of arenas on match nights in sizes from 4 to 18 inches, hollow molded figures have been an unlicensed staple in Mexico for half a century or more. Never stamped with an origin or date, it's difficult to tell when they were made. The 13" Santo here is likely from the late 80s according to the last owner, but near-identical figures were made in 1963 and 2013.





### SMALL SCALE SANTOS

Some smaller, solid-body Santo figures. The unarticulated statuette figure at front right is the single most common lucha libre souvenir toy, often sold in bags of 6, 10, or 12—hence the common term “bag figures.”

### MIL MASCARAS VS MUMMY

The best thing about articulated wrestling toys is pitting them against your favorite monsters in movies that never happened! Here, a Mil Mascaras from the 1990s “Magnificent Wrestler” line gets a retro Mego Mummy on his torture rack.

### KELIAN SANTO CU

An actual licensed item, the 6” solid vinyl Hijo del Santo (Son of Santo) figure from Kelian was part of a line of AAA wrestlers that was the hottest thing going in the mid ’90s.

### SANTO-CANDY DISPENSER

This 5” figure is also licensed and dispenses candy chicklets out of a chamber on the back.

### CHUPACABRA-MONK

This 14” battery-operated Chupacabra spins around and cackles like a hyena. The hollow plastic bank next to the goat sucker is a rare representation of Mexico’s version of the Crypt Keeper, El Monje Loco—“the Mad”.







## 12-INCH TIGERMASKS

1:6 scale Tiger Masks of the anime (Medicom) and in-ring (Inspire) varieties, produced in the late 90s or mid 2000s.

## PARKA-MISTICO

Mexico's most famous wrestling incarnation of Día de los Muertos, La Parka, is probably the most merchandised luchador outside of El Santo. The winged figure is an angelic representation of newer sensation Mistico (the original Mistico currently wrestles for the WWE as Sin Cara). The Ewok-like Alushe is a Mayan elf who accompanies El Gigante Tinieblas to the ring.

## 9" TIGER MASK VINYL FIGURES (SOFUBI) BY NAKAJIMA-POPY, C. 1970.

The first licensed Tiger Mask toyline was based off the hit manga. The articulated and poseable hollow vinyl figures came in multiple sizes with rings, cases, and other accessories available. Each figure started with a beauty contestant-like ribbon across its chest—an extremely hard-to-find item nowadays for collectors.

## DEVIL SPIDER, EGYPTIAN MUMMY, AND JEKYLL & HYDE.

RED STAR SKULL, real-life foreign heel wrestler THE CONVICT (last seen in the WWF as Uncle Elmer), and the Creature from the Black Lagoon-inspired PIRANHA MAN.



## MEXICAN TIGER MASKS

When Satoru Sayama toured Mexico as a Junior champion, his dimensional-enhanced mask made a sensation, influencing the garb of later stars like El Felino and Extreme Tiger. These are from the early 1990s, but unlicensed merch is still being produced today.

## REAL TIGER MASK WRESTLERS

The first two in-ring Tiger Masks, Satoru Sayama and Mitsuharu Misawa, along with other squared circle allies and opponents like the Great Kabuki, Mil Mascaras, The Destroyer, Jyushin Thunder Lyger, and the Great Sasuke—all produced in the last 15 years.

## TIGER MASK

Tiger Mask figures have been produced since 1969, licensing the manga, anime, and real-life ring fighter visages, with some Mexican knock-offs thrown in for good measure.

## TIGER MASK II

This 15-inch "Tiger Mask II", produced for the early '80s reboot, has spring articulated actions and came with deadly foreign objects like a ring bell and a spiked mace.





*Rafael*  
**GALLUR**

The  
Art of  
Fighting

"Dogs of War" from Topps' latest MARS ATTACKS card series.



*El Santo*

One test of a film or character's legacy is how they are able to inspire future generations of artists. Boris Karloff last portrayed Frankenstein's Monster in 1939; yet over seven decades later there is no shortage of artists creating new posters, paintings, sculptures, and toys of Universal's classic monster. The same has been true of Santo and his fellow Luchadors, except it might

be fair to say that their popularity in the US is even greater now than it ever was. Lucha masks are top selling items these days, always out in force at any cosplay event. Mil Mascaras was recently put into the WWE Hall of Fame alongside legends Mike Tyson, The Four Horsemen, and Ron Simmons. Santo's name adorns one of Scottsdale, Arizona's trendiest nightclubs. Lucha-

themed burlesque show LUCHA VA VOOM has sold out around the country. Luchadors star in commercials, comic books, and even make appearances in Guillermo del Toro's latest novels. Lucha merchandise, from bottle openers to shirts to key covers and vintage posters, are best sellers. And there's art. Lots of art.

Amongst those artists out there



*Fishman*

creating great Lucha art is Mexico's Rafael Gallur. Rafael recently did work for Topps that is featured in their new MARS ATTACKS line, but in his spare time he loves to create luchador art. Here's what he had to say about his masked masterpieces:

"I began drawing at the age of four, and I have never strayed from that path. I've drawn many types of comics: cowboys,

adventures, folklore, historical and—my favorite—Luchadors and monsters! As a cartoonist and illustrator I'm fascinated by shadows and by figures that enter the room when the lights go out. [Mexico's] culture of death and supernatural beings culminates with the Luchadors, the heroes that faced the evil forces and became legends in Mexico. That world came to me in the

comics of Santo, as well as his wrestling movies that sparked my imagination and eventually helped to enrich my comics and illustrations. These great fighters and their world of shadows are old friends, and I love them."●

<http://rafaelgallur.deviantart.com/>



*Atlantis*





*Tnieblas*





OPPOSITE PAGE: Blue Demon. ABOVE: Averno

# 45 YEARS OF NIGHT

PITTSBURGH'S MICRO-BUDGET SHOCKER THAT CHANGED THE LANDSCAPE OF MODERN HORROR

BY JIM CIRRONELLA

THE LAST MAN ON EARTH. CARNIVAL OF SOULS. INVISIBLE INVADERS. THE KILLER SHREWS. THE BIRDS.

While these and other genre titles, both well-known and unsung, are often said to have served as inspiration for the original NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, none—save Hitchcock's enduring thriller—can boast the lasting impact of George A. Romero's monochrome slice of the American nightmare. Even THE BIRDS, given its lofty position in macabre cinema, is unable to lay claim to the sheer number of remakes, sequels, rip-offs, and imitators spawned by that first appearance of ordinary people turned ghoulish flesh eaters some 45 years ago—a phenomenon now seemingly at its apex, with the mega-budget theatrical release of WORLD WAR Z and the pervading presence of THE WALKING DEAD in popular culture.

And yet this perennial horror classic, responsible for jumpstarting feature film production in Pittsburgh, began its existence not within the confines of a major movie studio, but out of the back of a van belonging to Romero's ragtag band of filmmakers. Working on a shoestring budget primarily comprised of their own money, they trucked around to everyday locations throughout western Pennsylvania and utilized people from within the community, both professional and amateur, in order to realize a vision of undead apocalypse that has since been copied the world over.

The genesis of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD began at The Latent Image, a modest production company started by George Romero and Russell Streiner in Pittsburgh. Toiling throughout the better part of the 1960s, they produced everything from television commercials and industrial films to short segments for MR. ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD. As bigger and better jobs came to the firm, they added invaluable members to their team such as business manager Vince Survinski, writer-director John Russo, and producer-sound engineer Gary Streiner. And though their work often amassed numerous awards and the accolades of peers, it seldom reaped the financial rewards afforded to their larger competitors for turning out product of similar or lesser quality. By late 1966, however, The Latent Image had acquired enough equipment to realize a long-standing dream: to produce a feature-length motion picture in house.

As work on the simply-titled "Monster Flick" got underway, it was necessary to secure locations that would allow for the violence and destruction of the living dead siege as graphically depicted in the script by Romero and Russo. "Although we had two small 'studio' spaces at our offices in downtown Pittsburgh," says producer Russ Streiner, "we most often filmed TV commercials and business films on

location. On certain occasions, we would use our fifth floor space for very small shoots. The larger first floor 'studio' was used for occasional film shoots as well.

"One of the first jobs on our 'real movie,'" continues Streiner, "was to find a location where the owner would allow us to do damage to the property, including maybe burning it down, and not repair the damage. By lucky coincidence, a part-time production staffer by the name of Jack Ligo knew of a former church camp property in Evans City, Pennsylvania. I researched the property and located the then-owner, Gilbert Gass. On the same church camp property, but closer to the surrounding neighbors, was a farmhouse with a barn to the rear. I was able to make a location deal with Mr. Gass for the summer and fall of 1967. Better yet, he agreed that we could abuse the property in any way we saw fit, because it was his intention once the filming was complete to bulldoze the farmhouse and barn, and repurpose the land." The use of an actual location not only lends authenticity to the film's fantastic premise, but helps to convey the overwhelming sense of claustrophobic fear that NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD has become well known for.

"Once we made the location deal for the farmhouse and barn, the second item was to find a nearby cemetery, and Evans City

was able to supply that location as well," says Streiner. "We spent two days of our 30-day schedule filming in the cemetery. Coincidentally, the cemetery was the first day of filming and the last. Other locations used were Washington, D.C. with the Capitol Building in the background, and the basement of our office building in Pittsburgh as the basement of the farmhouse." That building, which housed the former Latent Image offices and its basement on the south end of Pittsburgh's business district, still stands today. NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD's most famous location, however,

wasn't so lucky. "In retrospect, the biggest regret is that the farmhouse was totally destroyed," says Streiner.

In casting for the film, Romero and company recruited from among friends, colleagues and acquaintances—anyone they could find. The idea of real-life newscasters portraying newscasters, local hunters and policemen portraying posse members, and friends and relatives portraying the living dead added a gritty realism seldom found in other productions of that time. "I think everybody in town wanted to get in that film," says Lee

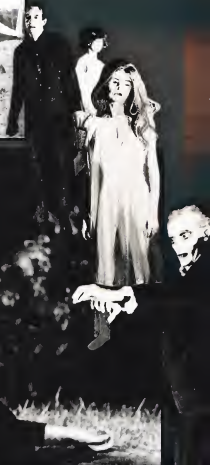
Hartman, who worked for an animation company situated in the same building as The Latent Image—and performed triple duty as a newscaster, a posse member, and a ghoul. "I don't remember who told me about it, but I jumped at it," he laughs. "Who the heck didn't want to get in a film? I'm sure [Romero] had to say goodbye to half of the people living in the city because everyone wanted to be in that film."

Casting efforts sometimes involved simply running into friends on the street. "I was the ghoul that got shot at the gas pump by Duane [Jones]," says Herbert Summer,



**LEFT: Robert Harvey and the KQV helicopter.**

**BELOW: Duane Jones (deceased) leans over a ghoul (Rich Sanderson) dispatched by fire iron.**





lifelong Pittsburgh resident who happened to be an acquaintance of producer Karl Hardman. "Karl comes up to me, and says, 'We're shooting a movie and we need extras. You're going to be a ghoul.' Truthfully, I didn't even know what a ghoul was at the time."

Ella Mae Smith, an Evans City local who still lives next door to the former farmhouse location, echoes that sentiment in regards to her and her husband being given small parts in the film. "We had no idea what the film was about, none at all," she says, "until we went back [to the farmhouse] and they started putting this goop all over our face and said that now we were ghouls."

Filming began in the late spring of 1967 out in Evans City with the crew often sleeping at the farmhouse location. Right off the bat, the equipment on hand proved less than adequate. "We borrowed some mics," says Gary Streiner, soundman for a majority of the production. "There wasn't a boom man, so with everything we shot, you had to watch the blocking, watch the action, and put a microphone in the most common spot, which is just such a barbaric way of doing sound," he laments. "The fact that you can actually hear what people are saying in NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD is a bit of a miracle."

Having less-than-optimal lighting was eventually utilized to the production's advantage, helping to create a stark atmosphere of chiaroscuro which became one of the film's signature motifs. "We had a lot of lighting outside, and of course that lighting was very dramatic," describes lighting supervisor Joseph Unitas, "because we could only use so many lights on that set, with the mammoth field that the ghouls were coming up and approaching the farmhouse. I would put lights on the right side and lights on the left side and cross light them, with maybe one light as a frontal light so the camera could record certain things." Crew member Bill Hinzman, who worked with the camera and lighting and also portrayed the iconic cemetery ghoul, further adds, "It was obviously going to be black and white, and black and white only



**TOP:** Filming inside the farmhouse with Vince Survinski, Russ Streiner, George Romero, Marilyn Eastman, Duane Jones and Judith Ridley (from the collection of Laura Parker).  
**LEFT:** Filming Judith O'Dea.



lights in so many styles. We had no real D.P. George [Romero] was the cinematographer and the director and the writer, so he pretty well knew what he wanted to do."

Often cited as the defining factor to impart documentary-like realism are the film's frequent television news reports—so authentic that when NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD ran in syndication on ABC-TV out of New York City in the mid 1970s, a "dramatization" subtitle was superimposed over those sequences. Hardman Associates' actor and announcer Charles Craig, who had previously worked in news broadcasting, was tapped to provide those reports. "It was pure happenstance that I was on the scene at that time as an experienced newsmen," says Craig. "I was able to take the basic scenario, the basic concepts of the story, and create a news reporting script from it as though it was actually happening." The former Hardman Studios on Smithfield Street in downtown Pittsburgh served as a convincing television newsroom set, with Romero and crew shooting into the control room while Craig and others took on the roles of anchorman and supporting staff. "I was typing right behind the newscaster there," says Lee Hartman, "and I'm supposed to hand him one of the reports at a certain word. But I had earphones on and I couldn't hear anything he was saying. So instead, here he is reaching back at me, and it worked. I thought I'd ruined it!"

One Sunday morning in the summer of 1967, the production's biggest shoot took place with close to one hundred actors, extras, and crew members converging on Evans City for the posse sequences. "That was the most people and the most equipment and so forth," remembers Bill Hinzman. "We actually had the police department of Pittsburgh come all the way out with [police] dogs." A call to WKQV radio in Pittsburgh also landed the film one of its biggest props: the station's traffic copter, which began Romero's penchant for including helicopters as an integral part of the story in each of the follow-up entries DAWN OF THE DEAD (1978) and DAY OF THE DEAD (1985). "So we land the helicopter and immediately we're surrounded because helicopters were still relatively new at that time," recalls KQV newscaster "Captain" Bob Harvey, known at the time for his daytime traffic reports. Harvey would be enlisted to portray himself in a scene ultimately cut from the



**Behind the scenes on the TV newsroom set (left to right: Charles Craig, George Romero, Paula Richards, Ross Harris, Lee Hartman).**

final version of the film. "[The filmmakers] would tell us when to land, and then I was expected to get out while this thing was still whirring, which I've done before," he says. "There was like a sheriff or the head guy, and I would pull out the mic and interview him. And I really gotta hand it to the posse. They must have walked up and back, up and back at least nine or ten times. They had the patience of Job."

Another noted scene filmed on "Posse Day" was Bill Cardille's famous interview with the ghoul-hunting sheriff as portrayed by the film's production manager George Kosana. One of the busiest announcers on television at that time, "Chilly Billy" had to squeeze in filming on NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD following his usual Saturday night gig announcing the weather and hosting CHILLER THEATER. "That was a long day," Cardille says. "I'm up all day Saturday, Saturday night, we went out and had some breakfast, we drive up to Evans City, go to the farmhouse. It's sunrise time. They say, 'Oh, have a seat.' So we're sitting there, sitting there... I was there all day and I got home about 7:00," he laughs. "So when you see me on that movie, that's after no sleep for about two days."

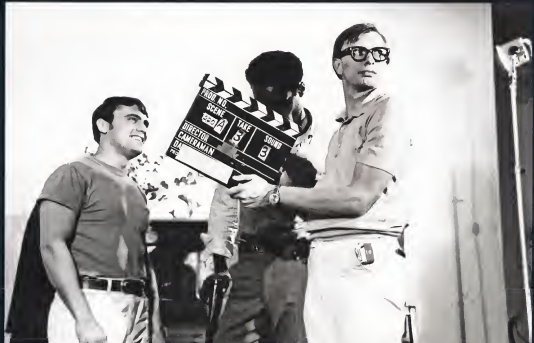
Pittsburgh broadcaster Dave James had filmed a TV news story at the farmhouse set when he was enlisted to be a ghoul—ironically, the last one to be gunned down by the posse. "So I went up [to Evans City],

I think over the weekend," recalls James, "and put on this torn, white shirt; they blacked out one of my eyes like the eye was missing, and I staggered across a field. They shot [the scene], and then they shot me, and I fell into a tree. And it was a good fall." James also relates a portion of his scene that was cut: "They didn't show [the entire fall], they just showed me kind of bending over. And then another shot they cut out was some of [the posse] putting a meat hook in my chest and dragging my body away to the fire."

With his part taking just one day, James wasn't around for some of the more infamous scenes to be shot. "Unfortunately, I wasn't there for the day of the frontal nudity [zombie]," he laughs. "And fortunately, I wasn't there for the liver eating scene."

"She was an artist's model from Pittsburgh," says Charles Craig in regards to NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD's nude ghoul. "It just made sense to Romero and everybody involved that [with] the recently dead coming back to life, isn't it logical that at least one of them would not be clothed? So there had to be a nude in there somewhere, just for authenticity."

In keeping with the tradition of enlisting the help of family members, production director Vince Survinski charged his brother, Regis, a fireworks expert, with creating the film's explosive special effects,



**Russ Streiner with the clapperboard while filming in the farmhouse.**

together with his partner Tony Pantanella. "They asked us if we could do the truck explosion. Certainly," says Survinski with a gleam in his eye. "If Hollywood can do it, I can do it. We put the charge in the bed of the truck," he says, further describing the effect's set-up. "We got pieces of old carpet, plywood, timbre—anything that could fly through the air with the fire as it was exploding. And when the explosion went off, it caught the material on fire, threw the pieces into the air, and made one hell of a flame."

Survinski and Pantanella also supplied the squib effects which simulated bloody gunshot wounds—another realistic touch not very common in horror films of the era. "I think the main reason I made it on the [credits] list at the end of the movie," says Herbert Summer, "was because they asked if they could pin an explosive on me. I said 'Sure, it sounds exciting.' So they taped a charge on my back and Duane shot me, except when the explosion went off, I went forward. And they said, 'We're going to have to do this over again because you're supposed to go backward.' So told I him, 'Duane, I know they're blanks, but I want you to point the gun over my shoulder.'"

In current zombie culture where everyone has aspirations to shamble among the dead either on screen or in the flesh, it's remarkable that NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD's ghoul actors were able to find their motivation without having anyone else to copy. "I didn't come by it naturally," says Bill Hinzman, arguably one of cinema's most memorable living dead, regarding his iconic zombie persona. "It was in the back of my head after seeing Boris Karloff in a number of films."

"There wasn't a lot to the makeup," recalls Bill Burchinal, an advertising client of The Latent Image who answered the call for ghoul extras and ended up leading the final siege on the farmhouse. "They just did something around the eyes. The majority of [the performance] was an emotional reaction to what was happening."

During the off-times when he wasn't handling the special effects, Regis Survinski was also featured as a ghoul. "George asked us to look dead," Survinski says. "I had on some old dirty clothes, and I sort of cocked my head to look like maybe I had a broken neck or something, and that it was hard to walk. And [Romero] says, 'Walk slow and keep moving.'" Dave James adds: "It was

a sort of stagger and that was about it. You know, walk slowly and no real expression in the face. Of course, I was missing an eye, so there's not a lot of expression that I could make."

Like many other films that pioneer new territory within a genre, NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD was both a box office success and a critical failure, with early reviews disparaging not only the supposed depravity of its creators but the state of the film industry itself. It would be several years before the film's gory elements could be looked past in order for its more thought-provoking aspects to be universally lauded. By the time NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD had reached new audiences in television syndication, it already held a coveted spot alongside Hitchcock's PSYCHO as the scariest motion picture of its time—a legacy that continues to this day. But without a major studio to continue its proliferation, it's up to younger viewers, who may not yet appreciate the film's deliberate pacing and black and white imagery, to revisit it—since they will bear the torch that enables NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD to last another 45 years. ●



BY LEE KARR

# THE DAWN OF A CLASSIC

35 years ago, George Romero's living dead ran out of room in hell. Leaving the farm country confines of Evans City behind, they staggered their way to the Monroeville Mall for a little shopping—but mostly for a bite to eat.

Involved in the earliest stages of DAWN OF THE DEAD's development was cinematographer Michael Gornick, who was originally hired to assist on sound for THE CRAZIES (1973). Gornick remained on board, working for Romero and his new producing partner Richard Rubinstein, on a series of sports documentaries called THE WINNERS. He eventually directed three episodes featuring famed Pittsburgh Steelers athletes Terry Bradshaw, Rocky Bleier, and the front four defensive linemen known as "The Steel Curtain", following which he would begin work as director of photography on Romero's vampire tale MARTIN (1977). "My involvement [came about] because I was at the so-called Latent Image," recalls Gornick, "which at that point in time was called Laurel Tape & Film. We became a kind of partnership of George's company and Richard's company, Ultimate Mirror.

"I was there from Day One," says Gornick. "I would be there when George would bring in pages, sketches, notes, outlines concerning the script. He would talk about how many exciting deaths he'd put in the film, in terms of scares. He'd play these back to me; we'd talk about them. It was pretty exciting to be involved way back, even during the inception of the script. Subsequently, I was there for some of the financial discussions—Richard coming into town as our producer, trying to

parcel together a deal. What finally became 'the deal' was the fact that we had monies coming in from Dario Argento overseas, and that actually made the film. We never really organized our own funds."

## Money, Money, Money...

The financing for DAWN OF THE DEAD was cobbled together from various parties, including Rubinstein and Romero themselves. For many years, the budget was thought to be 1.5 million dollars, but in a 2004 commentary for the Anchor Bay DVD release of the film, Rubinstein admitted that the actual budget was closer to \$500,000. A lot of the money did indeed come from Italian investors led by famed horror film maker Dario Argento.

"It was supposed to be half foreign, half domestic," says Tom Dubensky, Gornick's trusted assistant cameraman on DAWN OF THE DEAD. "And then I remember, 'cause we were gonna start shooting sooner, [Romero] said, 'Oh, Richard found some money, we're gonna start shooting...' I don't know, September, October [1977] or something? Then they looked into [potential investors] and there was something that wasn't quite right. They lost it; then they had to scramble for other money. Actually, I think they were still looking for money when we were shooting. I don't know if I should say that."

As Dubensky states, the search for funding would literally last throughout the filming, when Herbert R. Steinmann and Billy Baxter would be tapped to help finance post production duties. "I remember we were shooting in the mall, there were

these people walking around, and Richard was talking to them. I said to Katherine [Kolbert], his wife who was also doing the still photography, 'Who are those people?' 'Oh, those are investors.' I said 'Oh, for the next show?' She said 'No, for *this* show.' I never told that story that until now," laughs Dubensky, "because I wasn't sure if I was supposed to say anything."

## Hit and Run

Production on DAWN OF THE DEAD officially started on Sunday, November 6, 1977—not November 13 as has been reported previously. This first day was an abbreviated schedule, concentrating on shots of zombies in the Monroeville Mall parking lot. Makeup effects artist Tom Savini asked what color makeup had been used for the ghouls in the original NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, and was informed that it was white. This film being shot in color would serve as the inspiration to change the undead's pallor for the rest of the production. "Hated the look [on the first day] because it looked kind of clown faced," says Gornick. "The next day we shot was the following Sunday," adds Dubensky, "and that was grey [makeup]. It's been grey ever since."

The production schedule for the film would be a wild one, demonstrating Romero's dislike for any type of formal structure, with the production jumping back and forth between locations. "I don't think necessarily at that point in his career he had any responsibility to a schedule," says Gornick. "But you knew all the while there was somebody like Richard Rubinstein,

**FROM TOP:** Michael Gornick films George Romero painting gun (Jay Christian Stavrakis); George Romero and zombie (Gary Peabody) in the Glen Hazel projects (Jay Tony Bubba); *Zombie* (Taso Savvakis) attacks Roger (Scott Reinher).

The 13<sup>th</sup> through the 16<sup>th</sup> would be spent at the mall working on exterior shots; then the 17<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup> would shift to the B&P truck yard. It was back to the mall on the 20<sup>th</sup>, followed by two straight days at the Monroeville airport involving two of the film's most iconic walking dead: the helicopter zombie (Jim Krut) and the plaid shirt zombie (Paul Musser).

This was followed by one day of filming on the 23<sup>rd</sup> for scenes of the posse around a nearby farm location.

After enjoying a break for Thanksgiving, production cranked right back up on the 25<sup>th</sup> with scenes at the police dock. On the 27<sup>th</sup>, filming resumed with additional mall exteriors, and the following day it was back to the B&P truck yard to complete filming there. On the 29<sup>th</sup>, the cast and crew trekked nearly 50 miles west to the Burgettstown heliport for interior shots involving the WGON-TV helicopter, followed by more filming at the police dock location in Pittsburgh.

December's shooting schedule would continue the pattern of jumping around from location to location. December 1 would see filming resume at the mall, followed the next day by additional scenes at the police dock once again. December 3 would be a short day with filming at both the Monroeville airport and then at the heliport in Burgettstown. Work continued at the Monroeville airport on December 4, followed by scenes with the SWAT team on the rooftop of Romero's office building in downtown Pittsburgh. After another day off, production began on the 6<sup>th</sup> at the Glen Hazel projects, shooting the sequence where the SWAT team raids a tenement building. The following day, the cast and crew would move to downtown Pittsburgh, filming scenes involving the main characters crawling through the elevator shaft and duct work. On the 8<sup>th</sup>, shooting resumed back at the Glen Hazel projects and would continue there through the 12<sup>th</sup>. It was at this time that production shut down for the holiday break, not returning until January 4, 1978.

### It's Christmastime Down There, Buddy

On January 4, production would resume at a local television station, Channel 53, to work on insert shots seen on television screens, such as the scientist with the eye

THE DEAD with the scope and amount of people on set was jarring for some of the crew. "I remember the first days," says key grip Nick Mastandrea, another longtime Romero veteran. "We had done MARTIN; we had done all the sports movies. It always had just been me, Mike,

George, and occasionally Duben and a few other people. All of a sudden all these people were around. It was just shocking. On MARTIN, we didn't even know who was going to shoot the camera when we went out. We'd just kind of load stuff in the van and go. This was a much bigger system. I remember Zilla [Clinton, production manager] trying to keep things organized with call sheets, but we weren't having any of that."

After a week off, the production resumed back at the mall and would shoot for eleven days, straight into the Thanksgiving holiday.

who liked lists, liked progress, and liked finishing a project—things George despised." At first there was an attempt to keep things streamlined and organized, but that would eventually fall to the wayside. "The first couple weeks held up pretty well," remembers Dubensky. "But then on a day off, we would go shoot more at the mall; or after so many days we'd have to go back to the B&P [truck yard]. So we never got everything; after two weeks, it all kind of fell apart."

Coming off of smaller, more intimate films, a production the size of DAWN OF

patch (Richard France) yelling "Dummies! Dummies! Dummies!" January 5 through the 11<sup>th</sup> would see filming start again at the mall, concentrating on the invading bikers.

One of the more interesting sidebars involving scenes with the motorcycle raiders was a cameo featuring George Romero dressed up as Santa Claus and his wife, Christine Forrest, dressed as an elf, of which only an extremely brief shot exists in the film. In the novelization of the film, "Jolly Old Saint Nick" was one of the marauding bikers, but according to Mike Gornick, Romero's view of the Santa Claus character was a little more muddled. "I think it was actually meant to be a remnant of the mall—a zombie remnant of Santa and his elf," says Gornick. "He definitely wasn't a biker Santa. Knowing George, he would have featured him and Chris arriving on the bikes in a sidecar or something."

Among other scenes filmed during this week were shots of the main characters driving through the mall in the car. It was during these scenes that Dario Argento would make his only visit to the set. "We were busy setting up a shot, we tuned, and there was a relatively short man speaking Italian to Richard. Richard introduced him as Dario Argento, and I was honored! He spoke terrible English. I said 'Welcome! Nice to meet you,' and he said, 'Ahh, is romantic!' and I said, 'Yes, it is romantic, yes.'"

Argento's visit to the set was brief, due in large part to the fact that Romero and Gornick could crank out shots in such a quick manner. "We shot really fast and we got a lot of stuff done; it was amazing," says Nick Mastandrea. "George always said he'd rather have 100 bad shots than one good one."

Besides the crucial upfront money that Argento and his Italian investors provided, they would also play an important role in changing the film's ending. Originally, just like in NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, all of the principal characters would perish. Romero's original script saw both Peter (Ken Foree) and Fran (Gaylen Ross) committing suicide at the film's conclusion, with Peter shooting himself and Fran thrusting her head into the spinning helicopter blades. Contrary to previous statements made by Romero in which he said he liked the two surviving characters too much to kill them off, it would be the success of a recent science fiction blockbuster that would influence the Italian investors, thus completely altering

Romero's envisioned finale. "We filmed part of it," recalls Tom Dubensky, "but we didn't film the complete thing. We shot a test of the actual [decapitation] effect in 16mm, just to see how it looked. We did shoot the scene in 35mm for the part of Fran in the helicopter looking and considering; then she stands up and her head goes out of frame. That's the suicide. We never shot Ken Foree's suicide because I clearly remember when we were up on the roof of the mall waiting for something—either for actors, because from the community room to the roof, you had to walk that hallway, or for a prop or something. We were standing there, and I remember George saying that the Italians—meaning Dario and Claudio Argento—wanted a happy ending because STAR WARS had just opened in Italy. 'Romanza! We want a happy ending.' That was the first I'd ever heard of it."

## We Whipped 'Em and We Got It All!

Along with a couple of other scheduled breaks, production would last at the mall until February 4, which just happened to be George Romero's birthday. For his gift, the crew chipped in and purchased the auteur his very own director's chair.

With filming at the mall now complete, the production moved into the final two weeks of principal photography. On February 5, filming took place inside an actual gun shop located about 10 miles west of the mall. The 7<sup>th</sup> through the 10<sup>th</sup> would cover scenes in the main characters' living quarters inside the mall, which was actually an "apartment" set in downtown Pittsburgh. The 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> would see the production return to Channel 53, for scenes from the chaotic newsroom shown during the film's opening. And on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> filming continued back at the living quarters set downtown, just a few doors



down from Romero's office building. "The reason he picked that building is because it had a skylight," says Gornick. "The set was built around that."

Six days later, on February 20, pickup shots of the helicopter blades were filmed, and with that, production on DAWN OF THE DEAD was officially over.

More than a year later, the film would be released to both critical acclaim and box office success. The film community in Pittsburgh was growing, coming into its own, and Romero's family of filmmakers were at the forefront of it. The success of DAWN OF THE DEAD would bring about a partnership between Romero and Rubinstein's production company and United Film Distribution Company, which would finance and distribute Romero's next three films. "It was an exciting community here in Pittsburgh, because a lot of really talented people with a lot of desire to make motion pictures supported George. It was a wonderful feeling," says Mike Gornick. "It was like a family, you know? On MARTIN there was some of that, but DAWN was like the culmination of that family coming together, doing something spectacular and looking toward to the future." ☼

*Special Thanks to Michael Gornick, Tom Dubensky, Nick Mastandrea, Gary Zeller, Tom Savini, Tony Buba, Bob Michelucci, and Jim Cirronella.*



# ANOVOS

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A few years ago I had the opportunity to visit our friends at Hollywood's top movie memorabilia auction house, Profiles In History. It was a great time where I actually got to interact with a lot of significant pieces from movie and television history. One of the pieces that had me reaching for my wallet (before I was politely reminded that the auction was still a week away) was none other than one of William Shatner's gold tunics from the original STAR TREK series. Nothing says interstellar man of action like that gold top. Truth be told, I would have paid a fortune for something I wouldn't wear. And honestly, I would want to wear that thing everywhere! Enter Anovos.

Anovos is a company that specializes in screen accurate replicas of STAR TREK and BATTLESTAR GALACTICA clothing and props. In their short history, they've become one of the most celebrated reproduction companies in the industry. We sat down with Anovos CEO Joe Salcedo to chat about the company's roots and its visions for the future.

**Famous Monsters.** Anovos has established itself as one of the premier companies for top level movie replica clothing and props. But that didn't happen overnight. Where did the concept for the business come from? **Joe Salcedo.** The inspiration for Anovos started from a need in the costuming and prop community for a quality supplier in the most popular genres. Having started out in prop making, we were always fascinated by the excitement of cosplayers



at conventions, figured that there had to be a demand for certain uniforms, and decided to take a small gamble. Thus, Anovos was created as a promise to fans that there would be at least one source who would not compromise quality and would provide a choice for the casual to the most passionate fans for costuming and props.

**FM.** Starting out, how did you envision the company?

**JS.** We started out with one key purpose: meet the needs of the devoted fans with high-end, uncompromising quality pieces regardless of price point. Not much has changed from our mission, as we have not only been faithful to our promise to the fans, but also provided different levels to meet all types with quality products.

**FM.** So as you were starting out and conceiving what Anovos could become, how did you come to settle on STAR TREK as the first banner your company would fly?

**JS.** STAR TREK carries not only a name, but a legacy. With a number of TV shows and movies, it has created and inspired its own culture of followers, ranging from casual costumer to those who can speak fluent Klingon. Thus, with this level of fan-driven support, the answer was clear that our values of quality and faithful reproduction would align with the ongoing multi-decade fan base.

**FM.** In terms of production, how long does it usually take from conception to arriving in my mailbox, and do you get looks at the original pieces for reference?

**JS.** It really varies with the piece. Some pieces take as little as two months, such as STAR TREK INTO DARKNESS undershirts, and some may take years to find the correct manufacturer that would align with our particular expectations, such as WRATH OF KHAN costumes. For the most part, our access has been a combination of both fans and CBS/Paramount, allowing us to get sizes, textures, and sometimes even swatches to use in our manufacturing prototyping process.

**FM.** So many companies today are concerned with volume. But Anovos has gone the other direction and shown that quantity doesn't always trump quality. Do you think that's something that more



companies should adopt, or do you feel like you're in a unique position because of the very specific tastes of a loyal TREK and BATTLESTAR audience?

**JS.** We pledged quality from the beginning and we intended to stick with that message. When we first started, the manufacturing environment was only conducive to volume and less quality—or even those who stated quality but were never subjected to the level of our scrutiny. It took some time, but we ultimately found partners who were amenable to our level of demand and also quantity restrictions. As far as other companies adopting such a standard, it really depends on the promises and expectations that company has set with the public and how it intends to make good on those statements.

**FM.** What about moving beyond STAR TREK and BSG? Are there other brands you'd like to work with in the future?

**JS.** There are, and in fact, we have a few rabbits still up our sleeves. Whether we are at liberty to say at the moment is another thing, but I am sure we could put together another interview when the time comes.

**FM.** Fair enough. What types of new TREK and BATTLESTAR items can we anticipate in the near future?

**JS.** With STAR TREK we can look forward to, many more uniforms from DEEP SPACE NINE, VOYAGER, and even the WRATH OF KHAN era. For the BATTLESTAR fans, expect some re-issuing of some oldies but goodies, along with delving further into the pilot's realm.

**FM.** Last question—very important: do you wear the Kirk tunic around the house or running errands? Because I'm pretty sure I would wear it for everything from grocery shopping to getting married to possibly using it as swaddling for my firstborn.

**JS.** As far as my Kirk tunic goes, weather prohibits me to wear it as I live in a fairly humid environment. But, this doesn't preclude the STAR TREK INTO DARKNESS Khan undershirt I wear with my BSG bomber jacket during my numerous plane trips throughout the year!

**FM.** Now that's what I'm talking about! ☺

*For all the latest from Anovos and to up your wardrobe game considerably, head on over to [www.captainco.com](http://www.captainco.com).*



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*I'll never get sick of zombies. I just get sick of producers.*

*-George Romero*



## NEXT ISSUE:

This December we say goodbye to the final member of the "Bat Pack". FM Founding Editor Forrest J Ackerman and legendary author Ray Bradbury are joined in immortality by their dear friend, cinematic monster master Ray Harryhausen. Explore the monsters and movies that made Harryhausen a household name and brought delight to millions worldwide as FM takes a look at the life of this gentle soul who made giants. 2013 also marks the 50th anniversary of earth's most noted Time Lord, The Doctor. FM celebrates a half-century of DOCTOR WHO and his time travelling, monster battling, dimension hopping madness.

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